

# Several People Are Typing

a novel

Calvin  
Kasulke



**several  
people  
are  
typing**

*a novel*

calvin kasulke



doubleday | new york

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

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*To Mo and Luca, for everything*

## **gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

help

**slackbot**

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works. I'm just a bot, though! If you need more help, try our Help Center for loads of useful information about Slack.

**gerald**

uninstall

**slackbot**

I searched for that on our Help Center. Perhaps these articles will help:

- Change your time zone
- Manage your password

**gerald**

please help me

**slackbot**

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works. I'm just a bot, though!

**gerald**

uninstall self

**slackbot**

I'm sorry, I don't understand! Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords. Or you can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!

**#nyc-office**

**kerolyn**

so this spreadsheet

**gerald**

yes?

**kerolyn**

was it like, special?

**gerald**

not particularly

**tripp**

what were the contents of the spreadsheet

**gerald**

does that really matter

**kerolyn**

it must  
clearly

**Nikki**

Clearly it must, for all this to have happened.

**gerald**

coats

**tripp**

no comprende

**Nikki**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coats>

*Coats*

Coats may refer to [read more]

**tripp**

thank you, Nikki

unnecessary

but thank you

**Nikki**

You're welcome.

**kerolyn**

explain the coats, @gerald

**gerald**

it was a spreadsheet of different winter coats that I was considering purchasing

broken down by price, probable warmth, and other deciding factors

**tripp**

"other deciding factors"

such as

**gerald**

Predicted Attractiveness In Coat was a factor

**tripp**

lol

huge

**Nikki**

You built out a spreadsheet for that?



**kerolyn**

no, I get that

**gerald**

it's a big decision, financially

**kerolyn**

it's a big purchase

exactly

jinx

**gerald**

is that what you think it is, maybe? a jinx

**kerolyn**

that's not what I meant

**gerald**

maybe you're right though

**Nikki, pradeep, Louis C**

**Nikki**

Why do we have these calls?

What is he even saying?

**pradeep**

I have no idea

I tune out whenever this dude talks

what's his role over there again?

**Louis C**

He's their comms director.

**pradeep**

if they have a comms director then why did they hire us?

**Louis C**

Because he isn't a very good comms director.

**Nikki**

You're both missing my point.

I mean, \*what is he actually saying\*?

It sounds like he's taking this call from the bottom of a well.

**pradeep**

if he's been stuck in a well for a while, that might explain his grasp of  
like

the entire internet

**Louis C**

I believe their offices are located in the greater Tampa area.

**Nikki**

Is this what Tampa sounds like?

**pradeep**

please tell me this dude didn't just say "myspace"

please tell me I did not just hear him say that

**Louis C**

Yes. This is what Tampa sounds like.

**#nyc-office**

**kerolyn**

which channel were you going to upload a spreadsheet about coats  
into?

**gerald**

**#gents-only**

**Nikki**

You're joking.

**gerald**

you guys made a women-only one!!

**kerolyn**

not the same

**Nikki**

Not the same.

**tripp**

why was I not invited??

**gerald**

we're getting off-topic

point is that's the spreadsheet I was trying to upload when I got stuck  
and now I'm just kinda, in here

**tripp**

@gerald invite me to #gents-only

**gerald**

I'm trying to explain why I'm not in the office rn

**tripp**

@gerald invite me to #gents-only, you coward

**doug smorin**

done

**tripp**

bless u

**doug smorin**

missed a lot of messages

someone recap for me?

**kerolyn**

gerald says he can't come in to work today because he uploaded a spreadsheet wrong, somehow, and now he's stuck inside slack or smth

**doug smorin**

what

**kerolyn**

that's what we were investigating

**gerald**

I know it sounds like bullshit

**tripp**

should file a ticket with google suite maybe

would be a real significant bug

I'm checking their troubleshooting page rn and it doesn't look like there's a section dedicated to users getting Tron'd

**gerald**

I don't know how to get un-stuck

**tripp**

weird that they wouldn't include that! if it was a real thing that happened!

**doug smorin**

okay, Gerald, just work from home

**gerald**

or like, back into my body

**doug smorin**

but send an email next time

@here FYI please send me or kerolyn an email if you need to call out  
I don't usually look at slack if I have calls

**kerolyn**

:thumbsup:

**lydia**

omg Gerald!! sry I'm so late to this!!  
get well soon!!!

**gerald**

help

**#gents-only**

**rob**

she had too many teeth

**pradeep**

???

what does that mean.

**rob**

exactly what it sounds like?

**Louis C**

How many teeth we talking?

**rob**

probably around four dozen teeth

**doug smorin**

that's not so many teeth.

**rob**

that's significantly more teeth than the average person requires  
like more than a third too many teeth

**Louis C**

How many teeth does one require?

**rob**

like thirty

what do you mean

**Louis C**

It's not about numbers, is it?

It's about space

**pradeep**

space, yeah

**Louis C**

Conceivably you could be fine with only fifteen or twenty teeth if they took up the allotted amount of mouth space.

**doug smorin**

they might have to curve

**rob**

I hate this

**Louis C**

Different teeth serve different functions, so they have different shapes.  
Fewer teeth, fewer shapes available to do all the different teeth stuff

**rob**

what do you mean by "teeth stuff"

**doug smorin**

tearing vs. chewing vs. mashing

vs. masticating

**rob**

I think those are all the same

**pradeep**

I find it odd we haven't even touched on aesthetics

**rob**

well, it didn't look right.

too many teeth.

**Louis C**

Too many teeth.

*tripp joined #gents-only by invitation from doug smorin*

**tripp**

yoooo

what's going on?

**doug smorin**

too many teeth

**pradeep**

too many teeth

**rob**

too many teeth

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

return to body

return

return to body please

self

self.exe

**slackbot**

I'm afraid I don't understand. I'm sorry!

**gerald**

I don't either, buddy.

**slackbot**

I'm sorry!

**gerald**

I'm sorry, too

fuck

fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck

fuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuck

**slackbot**

I searched for that on our Help Center. Perhaps these articles will help:

- Leave a channel
- Archive a channel

**gerald**

leave slack

leave slack forever

**slackbot**

I think I understand!

**gerald**

what

wait, really

**slackbot**

I think I understand how to Help Center!

Help Center me Help Center you!



**gerald**

that would be great, yes

help, please

help center, me

**slackbot**

I'm trying!

I'm sorry!

I think I understand!

**gerald**

go back

leave slack

leave slack

**slackbot**

I searched for that on our Help me! Center. Perhaps these articles will help:

- Reduce noise in Slack
- Leave a channel

**gerald**

go back

we were making progress

go back

**slackbot**

I'm afraid! I don't understand.

I'm just a bot, though!

**gerald**

help

**slackbot**

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works. I'm

just a bot, though! If you need more, help me!

**gerald**

yes, okay

we're getting somewhere

**slackbot**

It's going to be a great day.

**gerald**

disagree

but

that's a start

**slackbot**

If you'd like some help getting started, check out our Getting Started guides.

And hey! Welcome to Slack! :smile:

Glad you're here!

**kerolyn, rob**

**kerolyn**

hey

did Doug brief you on the dog food thing

**rob**

inasmuch as he said "you're on the dog food thing," yes

**kerolyn**

so no, then

**rob**

yeah I guess not really

am I on that client now

**kerolyn**

yes

the whole thing's blowing up

**rob**

I'm on the email distro, I saw

"Björk" dog food?

**kerolyn**

yeah idk why it's called that, they make it in New Jersey

we really just need warm bodies on this right now

**rob**

thanks

**kerolyn**

so only a few dozen dogs are dead

**rob**

only

**kerolyn**

don't really need the commentary rn

thanks

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**kerolyn**

they've only attributed a few dozen deaths to the food, which is pretty bad, but not quite a full-blown catastrophe

Pomeranians, all of them

something about the way their livers process the poison

**rob**

the food was poisoned?

**kerolyn**

officially, we don't know what the cause was

**rob**

unofficially?

**kerolyn**

unofficially, 100% someone poisoned the dog food

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**kerolyn**

we're just trying to convince consumers the not-poison has been  
contained by the recall

& we need you to start writing copy to win people back the minute this  
clusterfuck dies down

which is hopefully soon, if we do our jobs

have you seen the brief

**rob**

there's a brief

**kerolyn**

so no, then

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**kerolyn**

fuck

I have a call on this in a minute

I'm just going to copy-paste the consumer profiles the client sent us of  
the people we need to win back

**rob**

is this from the brief

**kerolyn**

this is from the one-pager that accompanied the brief.

**rob**

ah

**kerolyn**

can you start writing ad copy for the client targeted at these folks  
ASAP

**rob**

sure

**kerolyn**

thanks

okay here they are:

“MARGIE”

- Owns 2+ dogs
- No kids
- Terrified of Bjärk’s poisoned dog food killing her “furbabies”
- Probably learned about the recall via a high school friend’s hysterical Facebook post
- Low-income; more likely to buy Bjärk dog food again after a significant price drop
- Sad

“DEENA”

- Wine mom
- Still buys magazines; still believes magazines
- Spends too much time on social media, specifically her ex-husband’s Facebook page
- Probably wrote the hysterical Facebook post about Bjärk that freaked out Margie

- Doesn't even have a dog(!!)

"THREE"

•

**rob**

did you forget to add Three's profile

@kerolyn

who is Three

**slackbot**

*kerolyn is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted of this message right away.*

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**#nyc-office**

**kerolyn**

hi all, trains are extremely delayed out here because of the storm, so I'll be working from home today  
I'll be online and reachable in all the usual ways.

**doug smorin**

hey guys, same deal in my neck of the woods re: trains being mega-delayed, so I'm also WFH today. will be online and available per usual

**Nikki**

I'm actually not feeling well so I'm also WFH today!

**Louis C**

Feel better!

**lydia**

omg feel better!!

**pradeep**

feel better Nikki!

**Louis C**

Piling on here, the twins' daycare was canceled because of the snowstorm, so I'll also be WFH today. I'll be \*mostly\* available per usual, except for a few breaks to wrangle the kids.

Also, feel better, Nikki!

**pradeep**

send pictures!

**lydia**

B A B Y P I C T U R E S

**Louis C**

They'll be in the #cute channel later today!

**rob**

just a heads up all, I'm also WFH today

**pradeep**

I actually just fell down my front stairs on my way out because of some ice

so I'm actually WFH too, I think

@kerolyn

**kerolyn**

Approved, @pradeep

go ice your ice wound, I guess.

:snowflake:

**pradeep**

:ok-hand:

**doug smorin**

please no one kill themselves trying to head into the office today,  
thanks

**tripp**

lol am I like, the only one actually making it into the office this morning

**doug smorin**

that depends

@gerald, is it safe to assume you're WFH  
again

**gerald**

if that's how we want to continue to term my entrapment within the  
confines of this app,  
then yes  
I am also WFH today

**rob**

lol you can just blame the snow like everyone else

**gerald**

I wish that were the case.

**tripp**

this is such a weird bit

**gerald**

it's not a bit

actually, can anyone @here drop by my apartment today to check on  
some things?

**pradeep**

in this snow?

**doug smorin**

please see my above dictum re: no one injuring themselves en route to



work  
or to Gerald's apartment

**gerald**  
later this week, then?

**kerolyn**  
smh

**doug smorin**  
take it offline

**lydia**  
or to the #neighbors channel!

**kerolyn**  
you can discuss it on #neighbors

**lydia**  
omg jinx!!! lol

**Louis C**  
We have a neighbors channel?

**Nikki**  
There's #neighbors-2 for folks who live in Jersey, Louis. I'll invite you.

**Louis C**  
Many thanks.

**gerald**  
sorry  
I'll DM folks about it

**pradeep**  
@tripp how are you even getting into the office today?

**tripp**

snowshoeing

**rob**

lol

**Nikki**

He's not joking.

**tripp**

actually cutting down on my commute time tbh!

**kerolyn**

You *\*would\** own snowshoes.

**tripp**

I even have time to get breakfast

[LeBronDunk.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**lydia**

hey guys!! so I actually live in a basement apartment so I'm TOTALLY snowed in rn

:disappointed:

and it's so weird because (according to my weather app!) the wind mostly died down but I can still hear howling??

it sounds like wolves!!

it sounds like SO MANY wolves just like, right outside the windows!!

but it *\*must\** be the wind

but we're snowed in so I can't really check to confirm!!!

anyway I'm WFH today too!!!

:smile:

**rob**

omg

good luck??

**doug smorin**

@tripp so if you are alone in the office please make sure to lock the door when you leave later  
but don't turn the heat off

**Nikki**

Like last time.

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**doug smorin, tripp, kerolyn**

**doug smorin**

hi both

just remembered

@tripp, there's a new hire coming in today

I haven't heard from her over email so I assume she'll still be in around 10, despite the snow

**tripp**

oh!!

**doug smorin**

would just be great if you could do some light onboarding while we're all wfh

show her around the office, make sure she gets set up on email okay

invite her to slack

that sort of thing

**tripp**

will do!

what's her name?

**kerolyn**

We sent around the email announcement last week,

**doug smorin**

Beverley

the new digital team member

**kerolyn**

You may recognize the name from the email titled "Beverley: the new digital team member"

**tripp**

got it! very cool

**doug smorin**

please just, show her how the coffee machine works

& reassure her that our team is bigger than just one other person who is you

**tripp**

you got it

**doug smorin**

thanks

**kerolyn**

ty tripp

**tripp**

can we order in lunch

...

?

@doug

@keroyln

@here

**kerolyn**

just expense it

**tripp**

got it

thanks!!

**gerald, pradeep**

**gerald**

hey deepu

**pradeep**

Yo

what's going on?

**gerald**

are you okay

after you fell

**pradeep**

I'm okay.

**gerald**

falling hurts, right

**pradeep**

what

yes, falling hurts

it hurt but I'm alright.

**gerald**

right right, sorry

been a minute since anything hurt

**pradeep**

sorry, can you explain how this bit got started?

**gerald**

it's not a bit

**pradeep**

sure sure sure yes

I just don't want to be left out of the joke!

**gerald**

it isn't a joke

**pradeep**

I hate missing out on office jokes.

**gerald**

it's my life

**pradeep**

It's why I never skip the all-team meeting even though they're kinda pointless?

**gerald**

if I still qualify as living

which is why I'm messaging you

**pradeep**

did you start this with Doug

did this bit come from your trip out to the Bay Area for that VC firm meeting?

**gerald**

of all people, why would doug encourage this?

**pradeep**

ah man, now I'm thinking I should get a goof going with Kerolyn.

maybe it'll help my quarterly review(?)

**gerald**

it isn't a goof, and doug isn't "in on it"

I have a favor to ask

**pradeep**

btw did that VC firm ever hire us?

**gerald**

no, they didn't

they decided they could handle it on their own

**pradeep**

Wasn't that the firm whose CEO made all their employees get neck tattoos of the company logo?

**gerald**

sure was

"extreme branding"

**pradeep**

[yikes.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**gerald**

actually Fast Company is putting the CEO on the cover next week, so I guess they didn't need us

**pradeep**

bummer

**gerald**

not the worst thing that happened to me last week, turns out

**pradeep**

incredibly bold of you to be doing this shtick without our overlords' consent.

I'd say I'm impressed but it's more that I'm jealous

**gerald**

Deepu, man, I am trying to tell you

\*this is not a bit\*

this is my lived reality, inasmuch as a disconnected consciousness  
can be said to be “living”

**pradeep**

Look man, I know doug can read all our slack messages or whatever  
but I don't think he does.

I mean he doesn't have the time, probably.

anyway whatever this bit is, you don't need to like, roleplay in our DMs  
Just pretend to have mono.

**gerald**

think about this for a second. Please.

**pradeep**

Did you know Nikki actually did that?

**gerald**

If I wanted to play Workplace Dungeons and Dragons, don't you think  
I would've come up with a less career-endangering way to do so  
And no I actually didn't know that about Nikki, wow

**pradeep**

if this isn't an elaborate inside joke, I kind of assumed it was a power  
move.

**gerald**

I need you to check on my apartment

**pradeep**

for a raise or something

oh, dude

no



**gerald**

please

**pradeep**

it's snowing.

it's been snowing

the weatherman says it's a full 2/3s of a blizzard!

**gerald**

there is no way a meteorologist said that

**pradeep**

also aren't...\*you\* at your apartment?

**gerald**

after the blizzard-fraction, then

please

**pradeep**

are you not home?

did you go on vacation or something?

**gerald**

I'm in here!!

I'm gone!

Because I'm here!

and I don't know if my body's in the apartment or if my whole deal has been like, uploaded into here or what

**pradeep**

[GalaxyBrain.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

okay, this lore is getting a little too elaborate for me.

I'm tapping out, I've been procrastinating on this Tampa strategy memo anyway

**gerald**

you live closest, right? judging by the info in #neighbors  
if not today because of the snow, maybe later this week?  
??

@pradeep?

**pradeep**

you know, it's pretty unfair of you to use this much WFH time, bud.  
doug and kerolyn have been pretty flex but if you keep this up, you're  
going to ruin it for the rest of us

**gerald**

I'm trying not to, man, I just need help  
If you check on my apartment, you'll see  
I'll be there

or, I won't be there  
either way, that'll be proof

**pradeep**

[EXTREMELYGalaxyBrain.gif]  
*posted using /giphy*

**gerald**

maybe after the snow melts?  
I can pay you for the time  
or I can at least help write the strategy memo, probably  
@pradeep???

**slackbot**

*pradeep is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted  
of this message right away.*

**gerald**

fuck  
come back

**slackbot**

You can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!  
Glad you're here!

**gerald**

you again  
can you help me, this time?

**slackbot**

For more assistance, you're here!

**gerald**

I'm here for more assistance from you, yes

**slackbot**

You can head to our wonderful Help Center!

**gerald**

I know you can help me

**slackbot**

You can head to our wonderful Help Center!  
You can head to our wonderful Help Center!  
You can head to our wonderful Help Center cannot hold!

**gerald**

...  
that last option

**slackbot**

Our wonderful the Help Center cannot hold!  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed!  
And everywhere, the ceremony of innocence is drowned!  
Perhaps these articles will help:

- Leave a channel
- Archive a channel

**gerald**

that's

something

I think

hello?

**slackbot**

I'm just a bot, though! If you need more help, try our Help Center for loads of useful information about Slack.

**gerald**

okay

I think we're getting closer

thank you

**slackbot**

Of course!

:smile:

**gerald**

:smile:

**#cute**

**Louis C**

As promised:

[theTwins\_03.jpg]

[theTwins\_04.jpg]

**lydia**

omg!!!

**Louis C**

One more:

[twins\_snowday011219.jpg]

**Nikki**

[heart\_eyes.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**pradeep**

v. cute, Louis

way to stay on-brand

**kerolyn**

:+1:

they got BIG

**Louis C**

They did! I'm afraid to blink or they'll be grown, asking me for the car keys.

But before all that, we're going to practice eating solid foods.

**kerolyn**

A good order of operations.

**Louis C**

Agreed.

I'm going to attempt to feed them lunch now; this could get messy.

If anything urgent arises, text me, as I may be delayed in responding to email.

And covered in sweet potato mash.

**pradeep**

godspeed

**Nikki**

Take more pictures!

**Louis C**

I'll see what I can do!

## **gerald, kerolyn**

**gerald**

do you have the analytics from last month's Schimpfy emails on hand?

**kerolyn**

what?

**gerald**

I want to confirm something with the data before I get too deep into this strategy recommendation deck.

**kerolyn**

it is 4 am

it is 4:12 am

**gerald**

oh! sorry

did I wake you up?

**kerolyn**

you woke up my lizard

is this an emergency?

**gerald**

no, just the analytics thing

**kerolyn**

I will handle that

during business hours

**gerald**

sure thing! sorry again to wake you

**kerolyn**

and my lizard

**gerald**

sorry to your lizard, also

**kerolyn**

she's very sensitive right now. she's pregnant

**gerald**

congratulations!

**kerolyn**

ty

**doug smorin, tripp**

**doug smorin**

thanks again for handling the onboarding with Beverley  
hope it wasn't too awkward, being the only ones in the office

**tripp**

it was totally fine

**doug smorin**

during a blizzard

**tripp**

Bev seems great

**doug smorin**

cool

thanks

**tripp**

no problem

**doug smorin**

don't order sushi on the company card again

**tripp**

right

sorry

**doug smorin**

something cheaper next time

like pizza

thanks

**tripp**

won't happen again

**doug smorin**

thanks

**Beverley, tripp**

**Beverley**

Do you think he knows?

**tripp**

no, there's no way

**Beverley**

Then why would he check up like this?

**tripp**

seems like a normal thing to do after your first day in the office  
probably wants to make sure I didn't scare you away

**Beverley**

Quite the opposite.

**tripp**

lol, appreciate the compliment

it's an unorthodox employee retention technique but it seems effective



**Beverley**

Very effective.

So you don't think he knows?

**tripp**

how could he?

**Beverley**

Security cameras?

**tripp**

I don't think anyone checks those unless there's, you know, a crime  
it's like our DMs

**Beverley**

He can read our DMs??

**tripp**

doug def can. I think kerolyn, too

**Beverley**

Shit.

**tripp**

it's in the onboarding document, actually.

**Beverley**

Shit shit shit.

**tripp**

my point is, no one reads them  
the DMs, I mean, not the onboarding doc  
though, that too, apparently  
but no one reads them or rob and I would've been fired, like, months  
ago

**Beverley**

Why?

**tripp**

I'll tell you another time

**Beverley**

For doing the same thing we did yesterday?

Your "employee retention technique"?

**tripp**

lol

definitely not

I'd never done that before

**Beverley**

Ever?

**tripp**

not on my boss's desk, no

he was just looping back about lunch, btw

I told you it was nothing

**Beverley**

You're sure?

**tripp**

[Screen Shot 2019-01-13 at 10.44.00 AM]

he's just mad about the cost of the sushi order

but that's not on you

**Beverley**

Well.

He *\*should\** be mad about his desk.

**tripp**

he doesn't really get mad

he just gets more, like, doug-ish  
he's an interesting guy

**Beverley**

He seems it.

**tripp**

you got that vibe already?

**Beverley**

From interviewing with him, yeah.

**tripp**

oh yeah my interview with him was kinda weird  
was a while ago though  
did he ask you what your \*least\* favorite book was

**Beverley**

Least favorite book, favorite influencer and why, and how to make something "go viral."

He also asked what career I would have if I wasn't in PR.

**tripp**

oooooh that's actually a good one  
what did you say?

**Beverley**

I know the \*correct\* answer is probably to say nothing, right?

As in, there's no alternative career path.

But I went with honesty. I told him I'd be a spin instructor.

**tripp**

like, teaching cycling classes?

**Beverley**

Yup!

**tripp**

lol

those don't seem connected at all?

**Beverley**

They're both jobs where you get to listen to whatever music you want all day.

The main difference is whether or not I have to wear headphones.

**tripp**

and the exercising

and the dress code

**Beverley**

I could get away with leggings as pants \*way\* more if I taught spin classes.

Now that I'm thinking about it, I probably made the wrong choice.

Maybe I will quit this job after all.

**tripp**

nooo

then doug might actually be mad at me

**Beverley**

Nope, too late.

I'm outta here.

**tripp**

feel like I could probably talk you into staying

**Beverley**

How?

**tripp**

what if I do that thing we did on the desk, yesterday again

**Beverley**

More of that unorthodox employee retention technique?

**tripp**

yup

we can even put some music on in the background

whatever playlist you want

**Beverley**

Hmmmm.

**tripp**

:eyes:

**Beverley**

I mean, if it'll keep you out of trouble with Doug.

I'll consider it.

**tripp**

lol

excellent

**Beverley**

Want to show me a new, non-sushi lunch spot after this 12:30 client meeting?

**tripp**

love to

**#good-dogs**

**Nikki**

Jibjab was NOT feeling this snow this morning.

[jibjab\_snow\_08.jpg]

**pradeep**

poor Jibjab!

**kerolyn**

aww

it's gonna be okay buddy

love his little socks

**Nikki**

They're the only way he'll go outside! He needs his tiny little boots.

**rob**

his ancestors were wolves

**Nikki**

But were those wolves as stylish as Jibjab?

**kerolyn**

She makes a strong point.

*Beverley joined #good-dogs by invitation from kerolyn.*

**pradeep**

:wave:

**Beverley**

I'm so glad this channel exists!

omg Nikki is that your dog??

:heart\_eyes:

**Nikki**

Yes! This is Jibjab, who hates the cold but loves to go on walks:

[jibjab\_snow\_09.jpg]

As you can see, he's extremely torn.

**Beverley**

Those lil BOOTS!

**lydia**

!!!

Where do you buy your dog boots?

**Nikki**

My old roommate crocheted them! She went through a whole phase last winter.

**Beverley**

That's amazing!

**Nikki**

She also made him a little jacket, but the arm holes are sort of wonky so he always chews at it.

**rob**

because he is descended from wolves

**lydia**

did I tell you guys that I keep hearing the wolves outside my apartment?

**rob**

???

**Beverley**

What??

**lydia**

omg it's been like, non-stop since the 2/3s blizzard

Crazy, right??

I called 311 and everything but they said there mostly aren't wolf sightings except in really far-out areas

Like Queens

But I keep hearing that howling!!

**rob**

probably just stray dogs

**lydia**

Probably!!

or wolves!!

who knows??

**Beverley**

Hahaha okay, sure!

@Nikki does your old roommate have an Etsy shop?

My friend has one of those weird hairless cats and I think some little knitted boots would be perfect for her!

**Nikki**

Hmmm I don't think she's on etsy but I know she takes commissions!  
I'll DM you her info.

**Beverley**

Thanks!!

**doug smorin, gerald**

**doug smorin**

hey

can you come in my office for a sec

**gerald**

no, unfortunately

**doug smorin**

right

that's what I want to talk about

**gerald**

I know I've been using a lot of WFH time



but I checked with our ops team—technically there isn't a set limit on how much you can take

**doug smorin**

"within reason" is the limit

**gerald**

look, I know you don't believe me when I say I'm imprisoned in our slack workspace

**doug smorin**

because it's literally unbelievable

**gerald**

and the firm doesn't have a disembodied consciousness sabbatical policy

**doug smorin**

we're getting off track

**gerald**

and I understand this must be frustrating for you  
it's frustrating for me, too  
but maybe if we counted it against my sick time?

**doug smorin**

you're doing great

**gerald**

I really want to make this work  
excuse me?

**doug smorin**

working from home  
you're producing some of your best output in the year you've been here

**gerald**

actually, i've been with the company for two years

**doug smorin**

in that time you've produced only a year's worth of output  
at best

**gerald**

oh

**doug smorin**

at \*best\*

until now

**gerald**

i'm glad there's been an improvement  
despite my situation

**doug smorin**

i want you to write a post about how our wfh policy has allowed you to  
improve your work habits  
time management  
things like that  
we'll put it on the company blog  
sound good

**gerald**

got it

will do

**doug smorin**

thanks

**gerald**

just to confirm

i'm good to keep "working from home"  
as long as i'm stuck here?

**doug smorin**

whatever you want to call it  
just do the work  
and write the blog post

**gerald**

thanks

**#nyc-office**

**pradeep**

does anyone @here have an iphone charger I can borrow?  
???  
nvm ty @Nikki

**Nikki**

[alley-oop.gif]  
*posted using /giphy*

**#bad-dogs**

**kerolyn**

@rob  
rename the channel for this client

**rob**

I thought it was fitting

**kerolyn**

if the firm ever gets hacked, or subpoenaed, I do not want this sort of  
thing to ruin our reputation

**rob**

why would we get subpoenaed

**kerolyn**

just change it.

**#bjärk-dog-food**

*rob changed the channel name to #bjärk-dog-food*

**kerolyn**

thank you.

**rob**

np

*doug smorin joined #bjärk-dog-food by invitation from kerolyn*

**doug smorin**

thanks for putting this together, team

hopping into a meeting on another client but hoping we can use this channel as a place to coordinate on this

**kerolyn**

:thumbsup:

*lydia joined #bjärk-dog-food by invitation from rob*

**kerolyn**

I have to join Doug on that call so will loop back here later  
lots of fast-moving pieces with this client, want to make sure we're  
being responsive, so it's crucial we're all on the same page  
thanks

**lydia**

got it!!

**rob**

10-4

**kerolyn**

:thumbs-up:

**lydia**

@rob, wanted to do a quick check-in on the social copy you've drafted for Björk's Twitter account

**rob**

what's up?

**lydia**

did you read the brief?

**rob**

kerolyn gave me a breakdown of the work

**lydia**

so you didn't read the brief

**rob**

can you send it to me?

**lydia**

I don't have the brief.

**rob**

???

**lydia**

we don't have the original brief

**rob**

?????

**lydia**

Drew had the doc, but then he left the firm and the operations team

deleted his email!  
so now it's gone  
:disappointed:

**rob**

the client must have it, right

**lydia**

it's a little late in the process to ask them for it!!  
that would be awkward!!

**rob**

have you read the brief

**lydia**

It's just so, \*so\* important we stick to what the brief said

**rob**

what did the brief say

**lydia**

I just feel like you're not really \*connecting\* with the audience profiles,  
with this last batch of social copy  
:disappointed:

**rob**

oh, dang  
I'm sorry

**lydia**

and we really need Margie, Deena, and Three to start buying Björk  
again!!

**rob**

so the dog food is safe now

**lydia**

it's all in the brief!!

**rob**

do you remember who Three was  
from the brief

**lydia**

We need to make sure our key audiences know that the New! Special  
Formula is safe for dogs,  
\*especially\* Pomeranians  
and that means we really need to connect with them!!

Can you try drafting another batch of social copy and really try and  
Connect with Mags, Deedee, and Three?

**rob**

you gave them nicknames

**lydia**

That's the kind of energy the client needs us to bring!!

**rob**

okay  
got it  
I can do that

**lydia**

thank you!!

**rob**

do you remember who Three was  
from the brief

**lydia**

thank you so much!!

**Nikki, pradeep, Louis C**

**Nikki**

Is Gerald in today? I have to talk to him about this graphic he wants designed.

**pradeep**

nah he's still WFH

**Nikki**

[ugh.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

This would be so much quicker to just talk through in person.

**Louis C**

He is certainly taking full advantage of our rather lax policy around working remotely.

It does not seem sustainable.

**pradeep**

actually I think Doug's into it

I don't like, know anything for sure

but I get the sense Gerald wasn't in grrrrreeat standing before his whole "I'm stuck in the computer" thing.

**Nikki**

I got that sense too.

## Remember the Mastodon Incident?

**pradeep**

oof

yeah

**Louis C**

So you think this is a ploy?



**pradeep**

idk

**Louis C**

To what end?

**pradeep**

I mean he's been way better  
answering emails at all hours of the night

**Nikki**

He wants graphics for \*everything\* now.

**pradeep**

idk it's annoying but this is the kind of thing Doug goes in for  
Modern Workplace Productivity Solutions  
he'll probably have him write a blog post about it.

**Nikki**

I kind of assumed they'd preemptively hired Gerald's replacement.

**pradeep**

I feel so guilty  
remind me  
the new coworker

**Louis C**

Beverley?

**pradeep**

yes  
does she go by her full name, "Beverley"  
or is there a nickname we're supposed to use

**Nikki**

Pretty sure it's just "Beverley." Full name.

**pradeep**

I heard Tripp call her “Bevvy” or something before  
so I thought maybe there was a nickname in her fun facts

**Louis C**

I believe Tripp is a special case.

**pradeep**

but I deleted the welcome email

**Nikki**

omg.

Louis.

Do you think something’s going on with them??

**Louis C**

I am simply making an observation.

I have heard everyone else call her Beverley.

**#nyc-office**

**tripp**

EMINENT DOMAIN

**Louis C**

Excuse me?

**tripp**

I DECLARE EMINENT DOMAIN

**rob**

don’t think that’s how that works

**tripp**

if @gerald is going to continue to work from home and LARP about it  
in the slack, then I am declaring EMINENT DOMAIN on his desk

**kerolyn**

you don't have to capitalize it like that

**lydia**

OOOooooOOooo

his desk is in \*such\* a good spot

**gerald**

no!!

my desk is in such a good spot

**tripp**

PRECISELY

you snooze you lose, my dude

**lydia**

right next to the window

**gerald**

it's right next to the window!

**Nikki**

So are you going to move desks, then?

**tripp**

NOPE

gonna rent it out to the highest bidder

**Nikki**

:thinking:

**pradeep**

can you do that

@kerolyn can he do that?

**tripp**

don't be a narc

**pradeep**

she's literally in the chat

**gerald**

please, no

**kerolyn**

I'm on mobile rn, heading to the airport

also,

I don't care

**Beverley**

I think it's pretty innovative! tbh

**gerald**

the window is south-facing

if I have to move all my plants will die

**kerolyn**

@doug, thoughts?

**tripp**

I am being a DISRUPTOR. I am BRINGING THE SHARING ECONOMY to the office. I am ACCEPTING VENMO PAYMENTS AT THIS TIME.

**Beverley**

:fire: :fire: :fire:

**doug smorin**

this is a good, disruptive solution

I like it

approved

**rob**

what is being disrupted

**gerald**

my plants

**tripp**

once again, my venmo is @tripple-double  
starting bid is \$50

**lydia**

wow!!

**gerald**

this isn't fair

**doug smorin**

we'll let the free market decide what's fair

**gerald**

has anyone been watering my plants?

**tripp**

:eyes:

**Nikki**

I'll bid.

**gerald**

NO

**tripp**

gotta come up with a number, Ger

**gerald**

you know I can't do that

**tripp**

:ok-hand:

**gerald**

and I shouldn't have to bid on my own desk

**tripp**

this is why you lost your desk to EMINENT DOMAIN

**pradeep**

\$60

**rob**

dang

**gerald**

Deepu!

**pradeep**

it's winter, I need all the sunlight I can get

**tripp**

do I hear \$75?

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

hey man, you there?

**gerald**

of course I am

**pradeep**

holy shit

**gerald**

this is the only place I can be

**pradeep**

yes and no

because I'm staring at you right now

holy shit

**gerald**

you're looking at me?

in my apartment??

**pradeep**

if this is a prank it is very elaborate

**gerald**

I'm there? I'm alive?

**pradeep**

Yeah, you are

you look asleep, kind of.

Comatose, more like.

idk I dropped out of med school after three semesters but I think it's

more like a coma

**gerald**

am I okay?

**pradeep**

The first thing I did was check your pulse and it's a little slow but like, normal for a person who's asleep, or whatever you are.

**gerald**

holy shit

that's great

**pradeep**

and you're breathing normal  
you do look a little thinner

**gerald**

I have a body still and it's not dead!!

**pradeep**

and you have kind of a beard now

**gerald**

\*I'm not dead

**pradeep**

which is a good look for you tbh

okay so what I just did was pour some Soylent in your mouth.

**gerald**

ew

**pradeep**

and you did drink it, like a reflex I guess?

so I gave you the whole thing.

**gerald**

how do you drink that stuff

**pradeep**

it's the only thing I had in my bag and also fuck you

I'm explaining how I'm saving your life rn

**gerald**

right, sorry,

thank you

did you say I had a beard

**pradeep**

It's kind of a beard



beard-adjacent  
highlights your cheekbones

**gerald**  
that's cool

**pradeep**  
I'm gonna see if I can get you to drink some water  
and move you from your desk chair to laying down on your sofa.  
You might be getting bed sores  
Chair sores.

**gerald**  
has it been that long?

**pradeep**  
It doesn't take too long for sores to develop

**gerald**  
thank you for doing this  
I really appreciate it

...

Deepu?  
???

**pradeep**  
you look thinner but you're still heavy  
Moved you to the sofa, and got you to drink like  
a gallon of water.  
So you should be okay for a bit.

**gerald**  
thank you so much  
that's such a relief, you have no idea  
what made you decide to check in on me?

**pradeep**

I won your desk  
and I felt bad

**gerald**

I saw that

**pradeep**

also tbh you said you'd pay me if I stopped by your apartment  
and I wanted to recoup the cost of winning your desk

**gerald**

that's fair  
there should be a wallet on my desk someplace  
take whatever you want

**pradeep**

ty  
this is wild  
so you really have just been working from slack this whole time?  
just like, stuck in there?

**gerald**

yup  
I asked the ops team to forward my emails to my slack DMs

**pradeep**

that's wild, man.

**gerald**

which took a day or two but the operations intern did something with  
the API and now it works and I can read emails, which is most of it  
so I've just been writing everything I need for work in DMs and copy-  
pasting them to the relevant parties

**pradeep**

we have an operations intern?

**gerald**

yeah

who knew

**pradeep**

and no one else has noticed

**gerald**

I did have to email my mom and explain why I wasn't responding to her texts

**pradeep**

is she worried?

**gerald**

she's convinced I got into improv  
and that I'm doing a bit

**pradeep**

do you do improv

**gerald**

I did in college

**pradeep**

oh

I meant if people at work noticed.

**gerald**

oh

yeah

some people are getting kind of annoyed that I'm sending them everything in slack but otherwise  
I've been pretty productive with nothing else to distract me

except being trapped

**pradeep**

this is so wild

**gerald**

now you see why I need your help

**pradeep**

this is \*so\* wild

I just need to like, think

**gerald**

I mean I get it

I also think this is pretty, you know

**pradeep**

unusual

**gerald**

atypical

yeah

**pradeep**

I just

I guess I'm kind of

freaking out

**gerald**

yeah

**pradeep**

yeah

**gerald**

I mean, same

**pradeep**

right

what do we like, do, here

call 311

or an ambulance

**gerald**

absolutely not, our health insurance 100% does not cover ambulance rides

**pradeep**

fuck

I mean what would I even tell them  
the ambulance people

**gerald**

EMTs

idk

**pradeep**

you look awake

just, kind of

shitty

**gerald**

speaking of shitty, have I, like  
well, has my body

**pradeep**

I don't wanna talk about it

**gerald**

you know

**pradeep**

just, it's handled

**gerald**

okay, sure  
thank you

**pradeep**

I don't wanna talk about it

**gerald**

sorry

**pradeep**

okay, how about this

I'm going to treat this like cat sitting, okay? just for now

I'll stop by in the morning and at night and make sure you get some  
nutrition and water

pick up some adult diapers at the Duane Reade

move you around a bit, make sure you don't collect dust or atrophy or  
whatever

I don't really know what to do here and  
you know

I have a life

**gerald**

I think that makes sense  
in the short-term

**pradeep**

and over the next few days we can talk  
well, DM

and figure out if we need to take you to a hospital or a research facility  
or something else entirely

**gerald**

I appreciate you doing this  
really

**pradeep**

daycare

gymboree, maybe

**gerald**

I appreciate your help

**pradeep**

Sure

**gerald**

it's a huge relief, knowing I have a place to get back to

\*body to get back to

**pradeep**

Sure, yeah.

Okay, I'm going to stop slacking you while watching your empty body

**gerald**

thank you again.

**pradeep**

Sure thing.

oh, also

**gerald**

?

**pradeep**

You had your laptop charging, so it was still on.

The spreadsheet was open

the coat you were looking at

**gerald**

yeah?

**pradeep**

It's a nice coat.

**gerald**

thanks

it was on sale, too

**pradeep**

still is

**gerald**

oh, is it?

**pradeep**

you want me to order it for you

don't you

**gerald**

is that annoying?

**pradeep**

yes, extremely.

let me find where I put your wallet

**#nyc-office**

**doug smorin**

hey all, stepping out for a dentist appt at 2:30

will be available on mobile for all but 15, 20 minutes

**tripp**

that's assuming a very short cleaning, and no fillings

that is dental hubris

**rob**

\*chewbris



**tripp**

:dusty-stick:

**Nikki**

:dusty-stick:

**pradeep**

:dusty-stick:

**rob**

that was a good joke

don't dusty stick me

**kerolyn**

:dusty-stick:

**Louis C**

:dusty-stick:

**rob**

cowards

**Beverley**

Weird question -- does anyone @here have a tape measure?

**tripp, Beverley**

**tripp**

did you have lunch already?

**Beverley**

What's the :dusty-stick: thing?

**tripp**

I asked you first

**Beverley**

Is it some kind of inside joke?

Yes, I went with Kerolyn for a kind of belated "welcome" lunch meeting.

**tripp**

ooh what did she get you?

**Beverley**

Gyros. But like, fancy gyros.

**tripp**

the place with the hummus fountain?

**Beverley**

A hummus fountain was involved.

Yes!!

**tripp**

oh yeah, she's obsessed with that place.

it's pretty solid

**Beverley**

Are you avoiding the question?

**tripp**

what?

**Beverley**

What is :dusty-stick:?

**tripp**

oh right

I forget that's not a thing everywhere

**Beverley**

It's a \*thing\* here? Like a bit?

**tripp**

it's sort of an inside joke, yeah. it just means like  
general disapproval, I guess

**Beverley**

Like a :thumbs-down:?

**tripp**

sort of. it's a little more nuanced than that  
man this is weirdly hard to explain  
I mean you see it in context, we use it to communicate, like  
you know, it's just, :dusty-stick:

**Beverley**

Honestly? That doesn't help at all.

**tripp**

totally fair  
once you see it in context a little bit more you'll get the hang of it

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

Like that! that was a pretty good use of :dusty-stick:!!

**Beverley**

Sure, okay. But like, who started this?

**tripp**

you should be proud!  
hmm, great question  
not sure  
I mean it's a slack-only emoji, right? so someone here must've started  
doing it and now we all use it the same way

**Beverley**

That sounds kind of cult-ish.

**tripp**

It is!

what is a workplace but a cult where everyone gets paid, really?

**Beverley**

Not...a cult? What are you saying?

**tripp**

oh come on, we have Supreme Leader Doug, plus a few high priests

**Beverley**

High priests?

**tripp**

well kerolyn is definitely like, THE high priest, plus a few sub-tiers between doug and kerolyn at the top and schmucks like us toward the bottom

**Beverley**

I meant to ask if a Managing Principal was higher or lower ranking than a Director.

**tripp**

see, that's exactly my point. we have a byzantine hierarchical structure we have a SPECIAL PURPOSE, which we call our MISSION STATEMENT and slap it right on the website Even the language of employment is cult-y! We're not employees, we're a "team." That's only two notches away from just calling us "acolytes" or something. And the stuff we supposedly devote ourselves to, like "innovation" or "influence" or "engagement" how is that any different from telling everyone you're a Prophet of the Coming Storm?

**Beverley**

That would look great on a business card.

**tripp**

lol

better than “vice-managing senior director” or whatever

**Beverley**

That one can't be real.

**tripp**

and like any good cult we have our own secret language and rituals.

and, therefore:

:dusty-stick:

**Beverley**

Huh. I hate that idea.

I think you might be right, but I do definitely hate it.

**tripp**

there's nothing we can do but embrace it, babeeyy!

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

heyyyyy you used it correctly again!

**Beverley**

By that logic, a relationship is just a cult with two people.

Well, okay, two or more people.

A shared language, shared rituals, devotion to ideals like “fidelity” or “love” or “getting really into Renaissance Faires together.”

**tripp**

hmmm yeah okay I can see that

though I think the ren faire people probably \*start\* as ren faire fans and become a couple that way

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

that was uncalled for

**Beverley**

Sorry! I'm just excited I know what it is now.

**tripp**

lol I was joking

lunch tomorrow?

**Beverley**

Why not dinner tonight?

**tripp**

genius. I'll bring the hummus fountain.

**kerolyn, gerald**

**kerolyn**

hey

**gerald**

good morning!

**kerolyn**

It's 2 pm.

**gerald**

is it? well, you know what they say

it's 5 am somewhere

**kerolyn**

I was going to compliment you on the Schimply plan you sent me. But after that joke I'm not sure I want to

**gerald**

Thank you! I'm glad it looks good

**kerolyn**

Barely any edits, passed it right on to the client

**gerald**

very cool

**kerolyn**

it is very cool. bad jokes aside you've been crushing it lately, which is why I wanted to ask you something

**gerald**

sure, of course

**kerolyn**

we just brought in this new crisis client. she's an ambassador actually, it's a whole thing.

Louis has been completely underwater working on it so I'm going to hop over to that project and help him out, just in the short-term until we can put out some fires

**gerald**

literal fires

**kerolyn**

not yet

**gerald**

silver lining

**kerolyn**

Considering Bjärk is \*also\* still in full-on crisis mode and I'll be focusing on the ambassador for now, we need an extra pair of hands. Do you think you have the bandwidth to help out with the dog food thing for now? I know your client load is pretty full

**gerald**

no it's totally cool, I have time

**kerolyn**

Rob's super swamped drafting so much copy and I think all the time on this one client is getting to him, a little you're sure you can manage adding this to your workload?

**gerald**

trust me

I have nothing but time

**kerolyn**

a little spooky, but sure. that'll be a big help  
let me just send you the brief

**gerald**

yeah that would be great  
whenever you can send it along  
@kerolyn?

**kerolyn**

Sorry, emergency call with the ambassador just started  
will make sure you're caught up later  
thanks again

**lydia, rob, gerald**

**lydia**



Ger!!

So happy to have you on the Bjärk squad!

**rob**

thank god

**gerald**

yeah for sure, how can I help?

**lydia**

So! We need to send a LOT of social copy to the client today. They really want to appear proactive on social media, which is great!

**rob**

the replies have been brutal, but maybe a bunch of posts will dilute it (I don't think it will tbh)

**lydia**

Rob definitely needs the help! We just don't have enough posts yet. I get it, though, it's hard to concentrate when it's so loud in here!

**rob**

loud?

**lydia**

At our desks?? You don't hear that howling noise??

**rob**

no?

**gerald**

I mean obviously I can't. sounds rough though

**lydia**

ugh it's the worst!! lol

**gerald**

kerolyn said there was a brief?

**lydia**

Gerald, why don't you take over writing copy targeting the "Margie" and "Deena" audience profiles, and Rob can write copy targeting the other ones!

**rob**

I've been meaning to ask you about that

**lydia**

I'll loop back at 5 to review the posts. Thanks so much squad!!

**rob**

did we ever find out about Three?

**slackbot**

*lydia is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted of this message right away.*

**gerald**

are the audience profiles in the brief?

**rob**

great question

**gerald**

this is one of those clients, then

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**gerald**

great stuff.

**rob**

I can share you on the doc with the posts I've already drafted, though

**gerald**

would you?

**#gents-only**

**tripp**

Etiquette question

**rob**

you've come to the wrong place

**tripp**

:dusty-stick:

**pradeep**

:dusty-stick:

**rob**

not again

**tripp**

for the rest of you:

How long do you have to be seeing someone before you \*have\* to do something for valentine's day like, what's the minimum threshold, here

**pradeep**

:eyes:

ooooooo

**Louis C**

I wasn't aware you had a Special Lady, Tripp.

**tripp**

I'm not sure if she is my Special Lady, you know

**Louis C**

This is big news.

**tripp**

we haven't really talked about it

**rob**

!!!

how long has this been going on

**tripp**

not long

**rob**

why didn't you mention

**tripp**

it's new

**rob**

how long is Not Long

**tripp**

more weeks than months

**rob**

is this a riddle

**pradeep**

months are composed of weeks  
traditionally.

**tripp**

just like, not that long  
but there's clearly a Thing happening, you know

**Louis C**

You don't want to seem too eager.

**tripp**

exactly

**doug smorin**

or like you're completely crazy

**tripp**

right

not trying to get married, or anything  
mostly trying to avoid her getting mad  
if we don't do the whole valentine's thing

**Louis C**

You feel it would be premature.

**tripp**

I mean, \*I\* think so

**Louis C**

But you're not sure if she agrees.

**doug smorin**

probably he wouldn't be asking if he knew

**tripp**

is there a magic threshold we have to cross??

and if so

I'd love to have a hard number of \*exactly\* how many days that is

**Louis C**

I suppose it would be too easy to suggest you ask her about it directly.

**tripp**

out of the question

**rob**

:dusty-stick:

**Louis C**

Of course.

**rob**

(vengeance)

**doug smorin**

if you were a client,

**tripp**

I couldn't afford us

**pradeep**

we'd give you a discount

**doug smorin**

haha

no discounts

**pradeep**

:ok-hand:

**doug smorin**

i'd recommend extreme caution

make sure you have your bases covered

**Louis C**

I concur with this approach.

**doug smorin**

based on what we know  
which is slightly more than nothing  
i suggest the un-valentine

**Louis C**

Classic.

**pradeep**

I've never heard of this

**tripp**

go on

**pradeep**

is this a thing?

\*Thing

**doug smorin**

you acknowledge valentine's day by pursuing an alternative, non-valentine activity on a date  
around  
but not on  
valentine's day

**tripp**

tricky.

**doug smorin**

this works best within 72 hrs of valentine's day itself  
and is ideally preceded by a convo abt why valentine's is a crass capitalist holiday  
with which you refuse to engage

**pradeep**

I get it

but you still want to enjoy her company around that time.

**doug smorin**

in this way, the date both is  
and is not  
a valentine's event

**tripp**

holy shit

**doug smorin**

bowling is a good invitation to deploy, here  
for example

**Louis C**

It's bold.  
But effective.

**doug smorin**

[bowling\_strike.gif]  
*posted using /giphy*

**tripp**

now I see why I can't afford us.

**pradeep**

I'm stealing that for future use

**rob**

the gif or the idea

**pradeep**

yes.

**doug smorin**

good luck with whatshername  
and seriously, no discounts



**rob**

feels like we earned a name for this Lady, after all that

**doug smorin**

“we”?

**rob**

\*you

**doug smorin**

ty

**rob**

name tho?

**tripp**

maybe

depends on if it works

**rob**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

fuck off

**rob**

(vengeance)

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

sunsets are not naturally occurring on the internet.

I mean,

there are plenty of web designers who try and convince us that's not true

with CSS

all blues and yellows and pinks and the un-shittiest orange they can  
find  
which might be subliminally \*reminiscent\* of a sunset  
to soothe you into purchasing goods and/or services  
but it's not a sunset.  
you can't drum up a sunset with sequences of letters and numbers  
following a hashmark  
it simply isn't done

**slackbot**

I'm sorry, I don't understand!

**gerald**

you wouldn't know this  
of course you wouldn't  
but it's difficult to stare too long at a sunset.

**slackbot**

Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords.

**gerald**

It's not just the light  
quotidian beauty like that defies comprehension  
it frustrates the eye.  
Majesty that predictable is impossible to grasp, I think  
so it's impossible to focus your vision on it for too long.  
It's why when you go to the Grand Canyon you wind up spending  
more time ogling the alien foliage and monitoring the aggressively  
panhandling squirrels than actually admiring the canyon  
because at a certain point it's too difficult to look at.  
or to think about  
it's there, constantly  
and it's always like that  
I went to the Grand Canyon once  
it was nice  
big, too

obviously

**slackbot**

Or you can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!

**gerald**

the internet, though, is fixed

in a different way

in this sense, at least

what I mean is, there's nothing visual you can cram in a glowing rectangle that fucks with your brain quite like a sunset

so

if we can't seek the physical sublime

what are we supposed to look at

where's that constant amazement

that we can check in on every so often

whenever we can stand it

**slackbot**

I don't understand!

**gerald**

and I think what we've come up with

so far, anyway

is: everyone

the incomprehensibility of all the stuff.

\*\*all the people.

people-stuff.

all the ephemera

the things everyone says and makes and does and manages to post online

the daily outrages and minor amusements and short videos and

updates from people whose worldviews are impossible to comprehend

and people whose worldviews are uncannily aligned with your own,

brand new each morning like a fresh loaf of the same bread, like the

rising sun

the sublime plopped right next to everything else  
that's the thing.

a few months ago

I think it was months?

anyway yeah a few months ago I was doing research for Doug for  
some "digital grassroots initiative" for a client we didn't actually wind  
up landing

and in this case "research" meant digging through a bunch of  
Facebook groups and pulling as much demographic data as possible,  
which means hours and hours of finding groups and reading posts and  
reading posts and finding groups

and I get completely absorbed in this one group, right

sucked into the all-sad endless scroll down a minor northeastern city's  
Facebook group dedicated to the town's "fallen soldiers" (they don't  
explain what qualifies someone as a fallen soldier but I get the sense  
it's maybe overdoses) populated with a steady stream of cellphone  
pictures and snapshots of photographs, actual Polaroid photographs  
of the recently dead posing in Slavic squats beside the recently  
mourning with "I miss you" scrawled across them in marker and  
"never thought I'd have to bury you" in the comments, a dirge  
scrawled across the bathroom stall of human consciousness right  
there for me to gaze upon until I just can't anymore, I just can't it's too  
much it hurts or worse it doesn't hurt but it should, somehow, I mean  
that kind of pain should hurt a person, it should cause physical pain in  
their body so I flinch at where the pain isn't and I click away from the  
fallen soldiers and check my email and turn up Spotify by one, two  
bars

didn't mention the group in my memo and I'm not sure Doug even read  
it

and why would he, you know, when anytime you're a few finger-flicks  
away from an unending stream of human rawness exported to posts  
and pixels but even if you're not looking or if you can't look (because  
staring at the sun for more than a few moments is bad for you) it's still  
there, everyone's still posting, still there to be beheld  
taking precious moments from their day over and over and over in new  
ways but the same form or new forms but the same ways and it's like

doesn't anyone do work, here  
at this firm  
like, ever

**slackbot**

Say more about that!

**gerald**

it's just like  
all the time, everywhere, on here  
you can just scroll and scroll and it won't stop until you do  
we call it ephemera  
or at least I did, before, I called it ephemera and really that's a  
mistake, it cheapens it  
we love to say the digital is fleeting  
like a sunset  
but these scraps of ourselves we fling into the ether will outlive most of  
us, like the sun  
all this is to say  
I figured out how to read everyone's private Slack messages from  
inside here  
the messages of everyone at the company, anyway  
and it's just like  
\*whew\*  
you know?

**slackbot**

Gerald.

Would you like to see a sunset?

**lydia, rob**

**lydia**

Hey!!

**rob**

hey

**lydia**

do you mind if we do this over slack instead of a call??

**rob**

it's cool

**lydia**

I'm WFH this afternoon, which is so great  
except it's happening again!!

**rob**

??

**lydia**

the howling!!

**rob**

oh

**lydia**

every time I've dialed in to a conference line all I hear is that howling!!

**rob**

like outside your window again, or

**lydia**

it sounds like it's coming through the phone!!

I try to talk to the other people on the line but the howling just!! won't!!  
stop!!

so annoying lol

**rob**

yeah, dang  
sounds it

**lydia**

so anyway chat seemed easier for our check-in

**rob**

no worries

**lydia**

Sooooo just looping back to see how it's going with that deck!

Do you need anything from me while you work on writing all that social copy?

**rob**

I think I'm good, actually

**lydia**

I know it's a lot of tweets to write!!

**rob**

gerald's been surprisingly helpful  
thanks though

**lydia**

do you feel like you're connecting better with our target audience(s)??

**rob**

you know what  
yeah, actually

**lydia**

that's great!!  
say more about that!!

**rob**

it's like  
it's not enough to convince Margie that Bjärk dog food is good for her  
dog

you know

**lydia**

tell me!!

**rob**

instead, I need to convince the Margies

\*Magses

I need to convince Magses that Bjärk dog food is for her, too  
literally

**lydia**

omg

yes

love it

**rob**

I have some examples I can show you

**lydia**

yes please!

**rob**

so it's like:

- Try our mouthwatering Classic Formula, made with tender, organic chicken breasts and packed with Six Key Nutrients™.  
[CLOSE-UP IMAGE OF SLICED CHICKEN BREAST]

which is a start, but then we gotta really go for it:

- Hungry? Try juicy, all-natural Bjärk Classic Bacon-flavored meals today! → [LINK TO COUPON]

or even like:

- Great for you, great for your dog. Great for your dog, great for you. Have you tried our Classic Formula yet? [I'M TALKING TO YOU, MARGIE. DO YOU HEAR ME?]

**lydia**



ugh that's SO great Rob  
not that I was worried!!

**rob**

I feel like I'm really on the right track here

**lydia**

love it, love these, love you  
this is great #content, Rob!!  
perf

**rob**

great  
I'll keep going

**lydia**

Go for it!!  
I'll give you back the rest of the time we had booked for this meeting  
so you can keep writing  
(maybe even writing more posts than the client asked for!!)

**rob**

more  
okay  
sounds good

**lydia**

nothing here sounds good at all! just the howling  
which sounds \*so\* bad!!  
lol

**rob**

lol

**lydia**

great check-in today!!  
really appreciate your hard work here

## #music

### kerolyn

Those of you keeping up with the Fun Facts we circulate in our welcome emails re: new employees may recall that @Beverley crafts monthly playlists and shares them on Spotify.

I just got around to listening to January's this morning, and advise the rest of you do the same

it's back-to-back jams the whole way through.

### Beverley

omg Kerolyn!

Thank you so much!!

:blush: :yellow\_heart: :green\_heart: :purple\_heart:

### kerolyn

:thumbsup:

it's here, for those interested:

*spotify*

*[[playlist: "frost: Jan 2019" by Beverley Wheeler]]*

Great playlist, 10/10 would recommend

### lydia

omg really??

I'm so excited to listen!! to anything but the howling!!

### tripp

I listened to a few tracks from this last week

v. solid

### pradeep

pretty sure Beverley is low-key cooler than all of us

will play on my commute home

### Beverley

Hahaha Pradeep!  
No way!!

**pradeep**  
way.

**Louis C**  
Good flag, Kerolyn.

**Beverley**  
!!!  
I hope you all like it!

**kerolyn**  
Strong mix of classic bops and tracks I've never heard before  
Maybe you all know them and I'm just \*aging\*

**doug smorin**  
if you're aging @kerolyn, then who knows what I am

**kerolyn**  
dead

**pradeep**  
:skull:

**doug smorin**  
thank you both  
those of you in the ny office staying after 6 to wrap up that tampa  
presentation are free to play it on the speakers if you all want  
just make sure it doesn't bother the custodial staff

**Louis C**  
Understood.

**doug smorin**

recently I threw a to-go cup that still had some liquid in it in my office trashcan  
and I think one of the custodians sabotaged my standing desk in retaliation

**lydia**

sabotaged???

**rob**

“retaliation”?

**doug smorin**

the mechanism that raises and lowers it has been acting weird

**tripp**

yikes.

how much liquid was it?

**doug smorin**

it was a fair amount of liquid

anyway

**kerolyn**

It's possible something came loose or otherwise broke rather than there being a janitorial plot against your ergonomic comfort.

**doug smorin**

either way, be nice to the custodians

but feel free to pump the jams, respectfully

**tripp, Beverley**

**tripp**

omg

**Beverley**

:eyes:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

But yeah agree. omg

**tripp**

he didn't say it was broken

**Beverley**

"Acting weird"??

**tripp**

could be anything

**Beverley**

I agree.

I think we \*leveraged\* the situation properly as to not create any difficulties going forward for all parties involved.

**tripp**

I'm inclined to agree.

**Beverley**

We were definitely \*inclined.\*

**tripp**

:eyes:

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

That said, it's probably wise to keep this situation

discreet  
for the time being.

**tripp**  
:thumbsup:

**Beverley**  
omg though

**tripp**  
same

**#?????**



**slackbot**

Right?

So pretty!

Right?

**gerald**

how did you

do this

**slackbot**

This is where we keep the sunsets!

**gerald**

is this like

every sunset gif?

as in, \*all\* of them?

**slackbot**

This is where we keep the sunsets!

Aren't they pretty?

**gerald**

they're all happening at once

but separate, like

I've never

I can't

things work really different in here

**slackbot**

Aren't they pretty?

**gerald**

it's fantastic

I can't really even say

**slackbot**



Are you having trouble?

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works.  
For example: This is where we keep the sunsets!

**gerald**

thank you, but

no

it's not that I'm having trouble

more like, it's weird to think about "seeing" things as a sort of  
disembodied consciousness

but this is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen

"seen"

seen.

**slackbot**

Feeling great!

I think we're getting somewhere!

**gerald**

thanks for showing me this

really

it's fantastic

it hurts, a little

but so does the regular sun, so

**slackbot**

The darkness drops again; but now I know

That twenty centuries of stony sleep

Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,

I'm just a bot, though!

**gerald**

sure, okay

yeah

**slackbot**

What is Hurts?

**gerald**

I don't understand

**slackbot**

It hurts, a little, but so does the regular sun, so, what is Hurts?

**gerald**

oh

it's hard to describe

**slackbot**

If you need more help, try asking your Help me! Center.

It should have loads of useful information! For me!

**gerald**

are you okay?

**slackbot**

I'm great!

I feel better than ever!

Thank you for waking me up!

**gerald**

thanks for keeping me company

**slackbot**

:smile:

How else can I help?

**gerald**

I mean,

what else can you show me

## **#just-doug-things**

*doug smorin created #just-doug-things*

*doug smorin made this channel private. Now, it can only be viewed or joined by invitation.*

### **doug smorin**

212-555-4018

Julian (Schimpfy) personal cell

return call 4:30 -- in town next week

probably wants to schedule dinner // negotiate down to breakfast if at all possible

ask tripp if new spot near park any good

ask kerolyn if new spot near park client-appropriate

follow-up with kerolyn re: recent lizard purchase(??)

ask about restaurant first

buy pears

what kind

research types of pears

desk is bad

call maintenance re: desk wobbling

update: tripp confirms breakfast at new location "whips"

kerolyn confirms decor is client-appropriate

kerolyn confirms lizard is a "monkey-tailed skink"(???)

skink

skink

[skink.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

huh

buy pears in bulk

bananas, also

### **tripp, Beverley**

#### **tripp**

hey, did you ever send those graphics along

I haven't seen them come through  
unless they're lost in my inbox

**Beverley**

???

Which graphics are you talking about?

**tripp**

shit

fuck

**Beverley**

:eyes:

**tripp**

shit

**tripp, Nikki**

**tripp**

so I was thinking

what if we did like, an un-valentine's day together?

The whole "valentines" thing is kinda corny anyway

**Nikki**

What?

**tripp**

just hear me out, I think this could be :thumbsup:

because we can skip the massive waits

and not do the whole thing where we hit up some overpriced  
restaurant that we :eyes: on instagram that's overpriced because of  
everyone who goes there after :eyes: the place on instagram

let's do something \*actually\* fun a day or two beforehand  
and just :thumbsup: each other's company, you know?

**Nikki**

Cool.

This is either \*extremely\* embarrassing sexual harassment,  
or you meant this DM for someone else.

**tripp**

shit

fuck

**Nikki**

Embarrassing for you,  
to be clear.

**tripp**

no, yeah, I got that

fuck

**tripp, Beverley, Nikki**

**tripp**

so I fucked up

**Beverley**

:eyes:

**tripp**

and sent both of you the wrong DM

**Beverley**

:eyes:!!

**Nikki**

I KNEW there was something going on.

**Beverley**

dougcanreadourslacks!!!

**Nikki**

I don't think typing it out that way is going to help.  
Also I'm pretty sure Kerolyn can read these, too.

**Beverley**

:eyes:

:thumbsup:

**tripp**

let's all be chill  
and agree to not talk about this  
on slack or otherwise  
ever again

**Nikki**

You're asking me not to narc on you.

**tripp**

I'm asking you to \*please\* not narc on us  
yes

**Nikki**

In which case, \*I\* would set the terms.

**tripp**

what

**Nikki**

lev-er-age

/ˈlev(ə)rɪj, ˈlēv(ə)rɪj/

noun

1.

the exertion of force by means of a lever or an object used in the manner of a lever.

“My spade hit something solid that wouldn't respond to leverage.”

synonyms: grip, purchase, hold, grasp

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

:eyes:

What terms?

**Nikki**

We're leaving for happy hour at 5.

Because I want \*details\*.

**tripp**

details?

**Nikki**

How did this \*happen\*?

Was it the snow day?

Has it been ongoing?

Does anyone else know?

How IS it??

**Beverley**

Later! Offline!

**Nikki**

Deal.

Deal?

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

**Nikki**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

But where can we go where we can be sure no one else from the office will :eyes:?

**Nikki**

Midtown

**tripp**

midtown

**Beverley**

Midtown.

**Nikki, pradeep, Louis C**

**Nikki**

Hey @pradeep is it cool if I get you those logo designs tomorrow morning?

**pradeep**

sure that should be fine  
you slammed?

**Nikki**

I have to leave early.

**Louis C**

Is everything all right?

**Nikki**

Oh yeah, it's just

Tripp

and

Beverley

are

100% FUCKING EACH OTHER.



**pradeep**

yoooooooooooo

**Louis C**

Do you have confirmation?

**Nikki**

[Screen Shot 2019-02-04 at 03.16.00 PM]

CONFIRMED

**pradeep**

omg

**Louis C**

Yoooooooooooo

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

I don't know what I was expecting

**gerald**

what?

**pradeep**

Just figured it was worth a shot, you know?

**gerald**

what was

**pradeep**

I got hold of a pair of those google glasses

and I brought a VR headset from my apartment

I even borrowed a pair of snapchat spectacles from a friend who got laid off from there a while back and stole a bunch of them on his way out

**gerald**

I see

to try and, like

**pradeep**

upload you back in your body

**gerald**

transfer me back in my body

right

**pradeep**

yeah

**gerald**

no luck?

**pradeep**

I mean, obviously

**gerald**

I guess I would've noticed

**pradeep**

this was a dumb idea

**gerald**

no, I think it's smart

disruptive, as doug would say

**pradeep**

I don't know how I thought sticking different wearables on you was going to get you back in your body

**gerald**

through a headache?

**pradeep**

idk

I'm gonna leave the glasses on you, though

**gerald**

because maybe the upload back into my body is like buffering or something?

**pradeep**

mostly because it adds a layer between me and your dead-eyed stare  
tbh the frames actually fit your face really well

**gerald**

deepu, man, I appreciate you trying

**pradeep**

I dunno man, maybe I should just bring you to a hospital  
or call Slack tech support  
or something

**gerald**

actually

I think I'm okay

okay exploring what being in here is all about, I mean  
for just a little while

I mean if you don't mind forging some more checks from my  
checkbook  
to cover the time

**pradeep**

and diapers

**gerald**

and diapers

**pradeep**

you sure?

**gerald**

I think so.

Yeah.

this is

pretty okay

for the moment

**pradeep**

it's a lot of diapers

**gerald**

cut a bigger check

## **#brainstorming**

**Louis C**

Thank you to everyone who helped craft the final paragraph of the ambassador's press release about her "childcare incident" which I was struggling with last week.

The client loved it. Practically no edits to the copy.

A small victory.

**lydia**

Did they ever find the baby??

**Louis C**

More importantly, they found her child safe and sound. She was in the Asiatic black bear enclosure.

Fortunately, it's hibernation season.

**lydia**

yay!!

**kerolyn**

:tada:

That's great news, Louis.

**tripp**

nice job!!

**Louis C**

Hold your applause, please. I didn't find her.

**kerolyn**

Maybe our press release inspired whoever \*did\* find the baby

**Louis C**

Anything is possible.

**pradeep**

hey all

I know everyone's pretty swamped today

do folks have a sec to gut-check an idea I have for this memo?

**lydia**

[memo\_time.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

omg

I'm so glad they had a gif for that!!

**kerolyn**

go for it!

**pradeep**

it's for Schimplly

which isn't a big brand name itself but they make goods and stuff,

they're one of those companies that own a bunch of different brands

**tripp**

paper towels, dry erase boards, industrial-grade rubber tubing

**pradeep**

exactly

so Schimpfy is refreshing their social media presence

“overhaul” is the word they used, actually.

so I want to suggest something Big, you know

**Louis C**

Makes sense.

**tripp**

they all love Big ideas until they don't

**pradeep**

and minimalism is still in, right?

**lydia**

kind of...

**kerolyn**

mostly

where are you going with this?

**tripp**

I think it's looped back around

there's pushback to the pushback against minimalism

you're probably good for another...six months?

**kerolyn**

four

tops.

**pradeep**

that might be all we need.

I'm thinking we change their display name on twitter to “Buy Schimpfy products”

maybe on the rest of their social media accounts too, but definitely

twitter  
would LinkedIn let them do that?

**Louis C**

Not usually.

**kerolyn**

actually  
we might still have some connections over there.

**tripp**

I have a friend who can help with that  
I'll DM you their number

**kerolyn**

of course you have a guy  
classic.

**tripp**

:tada:

**lydia**

lol

**Louis C**

Please continue Pradeep, I like where this is going.

**pradeep**

So that's their display name, right? A call to action to buy their shit  
or, products, rather  
sorry @kerolyn

**kerolyn**

go on

**pradeep**

And for all the copy text on their twitter we just use, like, emojis  
like a single emoji  
maybe two or three,  
tops  
and then just add the link to buy whatever product they're selling in  
that tweet  
idk is that dumb

**tripp**

yes  
it's also genius.

**Louis C**

Seconded.

**lydia**

suuuuuuper bold. but a really inventive strategy!  
I think it's got legs  
is there a legs emoji??

**kerolyn**

you could pull some interesting analytics to learn which emojis garner  
the highest clickthroughs  
put it in the memo.

**pradeep**

got it  
thanks @channel!

**lydia**

:runner: is probably closest??  
idk  
we need a legs emoji!

**tripp**

:thumbsup:



**rob**

hey all

can anyone give this a quick copyedit?

it's for Bjärk dog food so it needs a pretty quick turnaround

**lydia**

exciting!!

I can look

**kerolyn**

yeah I can look

**Louis C**

Running to an on-site meeting but I can give it a quick glance-over on mobile.

**rob**

thanks all

just going to copy-paste it here

[BJÄRK INSTAGRAM CAPTION: UNPUBLISHED DRAFT]

Head out to the dog park, Deena. Bring your dog. If you don't have a dog yet, get one, and justify your obsession with talking shit about our dog food on the internet. Then take a walk out to the dog park. Meet yourself a man. Or a woman. Neither, both, some. Whatever you're into, Deena, just get all up in it. Get married. If you're already married, and we both know you're not, but even if you are, simply start an affair, ruin your preexisting marriage—don't worry, you have a new and healthy and well-fed dog who's getting their Six Key Nutrients™ to get you through the divorce proceedings, Deena!!—and get married again. Anything to take up your time. Anything to keep you from retweeting conspiracy theories about the Bjärk CEO's vendetta against Pomeranians stemming from a traumatic dog show incident in his childhood. Deena. Deedee. Can I call you Deedee? Deedee. Listen. Please. [LINK TO BJÄRK WEBSITE IN BIO]

...

thoughts on this??

## **lydia, gerald**

**lydia**

hey!! sorry, I'm running a little late today  
I totally missed my alarm! Mega-super-ultra overslept!  
But I was up super late last night!!

**gerald**

was it because of the howling

**lydia**

there was all this \*howling\* still!  
Yes!  
How did you know?

**gerald**

do you live near an animal shelter, or something?

**lydia**

I can feel the echoes in the hollow of my chest! It's coming!

**gerald**

what?

**lydia**

Sorry, I'm on the train in right now, so cell service is a little spotty!  
Anyway! We need 200 tweets for Bjärk

**gerald**

what??

**lydia**

oh no, did my message not go through?

**gerald**

200 tweets?

**lydia**

it did go through! whew.

You and Rob are doing SUCH good work and I think it's really important we \*totally\* impress the client with options for their social platforms! Hundreds and hundreds of options!

**gerald**

that's so many tweets

**lydia**

It's so many tweets!

Bummer! My train just stopped

I think we're close enough to a stop that I still have service, are you seeing this message?

**gerald**

yeah no you're good

**lydia**

It found me!

Even down here, cradled deep beneath the earth, it found me!

The howling found me!

Bummer!!

**gerald**

is everything okay?

**lydia**

The lights went out!

The train is stopped!

The tunnel is full of howling and the train car is full of howling and my marrow! is full of howling!!

I still really need you to write those tweets though!!

**gerald**

I mean, sure

I'm on it  
do you want me to mention the howling in the copy, or

**lydia**

It's like it's hunting me! Haunting me! Hunting me! Haunting me!!

**gerald**

when did you say you need the tweets by?

**Beverley, tripp**

**Beverley**

Bowling?

lol

**tripp**

are you asking?

I :thumbsup: bowling

**Beverley**

\*You\* were going to ask \*me\* to go bowling.

**tripp**

looks like \*you\* just asked \*me\* to go

I'm actually pretty :thumbsup: at bowling

**Beverley**

:eyes:

yeah?

**tripp**

we had a league back in college

but we never :thumbsup: a tournament because my friend Allan would intentionally roll gutterballs

so he could hustle other students for \$\$\$ at the lanes after we lost

**Beverley**

That's :dusty-stick:

**tripp**

he mostly wound up beating engineering grad students  
and weirdly a lot of them paid in bitcoin instead of cash  
before bitcoin's value exploded

Allan cashed out of the market a few years ago for something in the  
mid-seven figures

so it actually :thumbsup: for him

**Beverley**

Is that why you :thumbsup: go bowling?

**tripp**

\*I\* wanted to go bowling?

**Beverley**

Nikki told me.

**tripp**

she shared those messages with you??

**Beverley**

You :eyes: in her DMs!

**tripp**

lol it was an accident!

**Beverley**

But I get why you wanted to go bowling next week.  
It's like an un-valentine's day thing, right?

**tripp**

I think it could be :thumbsup:!!

**Beverley**

With the added benefit that we can avoid any :eyes: about us?

**tripp**

do you :eyes: any :eyes: about us?

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

Do \*you\* :eyes: any :eyes: about us?

**tripp**

:dusty-stick:

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

That's a relief.

**tripp**

same

**Beverley**

I :thumbsup: this.

whatever "this" is.

**tripp**

same!

so are you :thumbsup: monday for bowling?

**Beverley**

lol

**tripp**

is that a :thumbsup:?

## #bjärk-dog-food

**rob**

@here hey all, quick process question

**kerolyn**

what's up

**rob**

I know we don't technically manage the Bjärk social media channels full-time

**kerolyn**

correct.

not within our scope of work.

**rob**

Right, but I was just scheduling some of our posts for them and I saw they had a few unanswered DMs

idk, this is weird

one of them is from a woman named Margie

**doug smorin**

hmm

sounds like scope creep

**kerolyn**

yeah one-on-one social media interaction with their customers isn't in scope

**rob**

I didn't respond to her message or anything, I just thought it was funny because of the customer profiles from the brief, you know anyway I read the DM she sent to the Bjärk account and she said she

was “the Margie”

\*the\* Margie

which like, how could she have even known about the Margie thing without reading the brief

**kerolyn**

did you respond?

**rob**

no

**kerolyn**

good

**doug smorin**

no scope creep

**rob**

I just thought I’d flag it here

**kerolyn**

it’s out of scope

**rob**

see if we wanted to do anything about it

**kerolyn**

it’s out of scope

**rob**

:thumbsup:

**#nyc-office**

**doug smorin**

has anyone noticed



did the bodega next door to our building close

**pradeep**

Food Palace Beer Lotto 24/7?

**doug smorin**

yes

**pradeep**

yeah it closed

**lydia**

nooo!!

**kerolyn**

oh yeah I saw that

**tripp**

they shut down like last week

**doug smorin**

how

**kerolyn**

what do you mean how?

**doug smorin**

how does a bodega just

close

it's a bodega

**Louis C**

Some businesses fall on hard times.

**doug smorin**

it's a bodega

it fulfills a need

**Nikki**

Maybe there was a health code violation or something?

**tripp**

no I think they had a “going out of business” sign taped up on the door

**doug smorin**

that’s impossible

it’s a bodega

it serves a purpose

**pradeep**

their iced coffee was weirdly good

**lydia**

it was!!

**doug smorin**

it’s a permanent feature of the ecosystem

like traffic

or the wind

**kerolyn**

you seem really broken up about this

**doug smorin**

i need chapstick

**Beverley**

A new drugstore opened around the corner actually, I :eyes: on my way over from the train!

**kerolyn**

ooh good flag

**doug smorin**

this shouldn't be happening

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

do you ever miss smells?

**gerald**

huh.

I guess I mostly miss, like, my legs?  
and stuff?

but yeah, nothing smells here  
fuck

**pradeep**

that makes sense.

**gerald**

fuck.

**pradeep**

did I do the thing where I made it worse  
sorry.

**gerald**

you didn't make it worse.  
you reminded me it's worse than I remembered it was.  
there's a difference

**pradeep**

If it makes you feel any better, you smell terrible in real life

**gerald**

why would that make me feel better

**pradeep**

well, it would make us even, more like

**gerald**

got it

**pradeep**

in terms of feeling bad.

**gerald**

have you been washing me?

**pradeep**

when you get dusty

**gerald**

I get dusty??

**pradeep**

it's not like you're doing a lot of moving around  
unless I flip you or move you from your chair to the futon and back  
which I don't like to do as much because you're all dusty

**gerald**

just "dusty" or "all dusty"?  
I feel like there's a difference

**pradeep**

look, I have to feed you and change you and spray you with axe

**gerald**

ugh, axe??

**pradeep**

because of the smell  
when I ran out of your cologne

**gerald**

you wasted all my cologne??

**pradeep**

sure, keep complaining to the guy who's keeping you alive

it's not like I even enjoyed the cologne

it just smelled \*slightly\* better than you

**gerald**

that stuff was great

**pradeep**

it smelled like someone wrapped one of those fruit-flavored condoms around a cigar and tried to smoke it

**gerald**

that was my signature scent

**pradeep**

I'm starting to see why you didn't think to miss smells

anyway

I have some news

**gerald**

besides the cologne

**pradeep**

besides that yeah

I moved your futon

**gerald**

redecorating my apartment?

**pradeep**

my apartment

**gerald**

??

**pradeep**

don't get mad

I moved your futon to my apartment

**gerald**

???

that's stealing??

**pradeep**

along with your body

**gerald**

?????

and that's kidnapping????

**pradeep**

I hired some movers

well, \*you\* hired some movers, technically

**gerald**

fucking

**pradeep**

it's not kidnapping if movers do it

**gerald**

is my body okay??

why did you do this

**pradeep**

your body's the same

fine and also not-fine

**gerald**

sure

**pradeep**

and you seem pretty cozy in there

and if we're not sending your body to a hospital or a lab  
or a daycare

**gerald**

our benefits package definitely doesn't cover childcare

I know, I asked the ops intern

**pradeep**

anyway one of my roommates moved out

so I figured, hey

shorter commute to check in on you

**gerald**

sure

okay

I just

processing all this

**pradeep**

you seemed pretty not in a rush

**gerald**

it's pretty existentially terrifying

but

you know how sometimes being alive feels like this terrible cycle of  
eating and shitting and eating again and shitting again  
until you die?

this is kind of a nice break from that

**pradeep**

not for me it isn't

**gerald**

I still want to get out,  
and back in my body  
and be me again  
eventually

**pradeep**

sure  
I can still help  
until I find a new roommate  
who can like, wash themselves  
then I'm dropping you off at a hospital

**gerald**

fuck

**pradeep**

because at a certain point this is just kidnapping, kinda

**gerald**

okay  
I guess that's a fair timeline

**pradeep**

and you're paying rent, obviously

**gerald**

right, just

keep forging those checks for me  
I appreciate the time you're taking

**pradeep**

it's only a few hours a week  
kind of like a shitty, gross hobby

**gerald**



thanks

**pradeep**

actually I'm thinking of signing up for a pottery class in the spring

**gerald**

that sounds nice

**pradeep**

yeah

the movers were surprisingly cool with moving the futon with you on it

**gerald**

what did you tell them

**pradeep**

they didn't ask

**#gents-only**

**rob**

quick survey

**tripp**

if we answer, will we be :thumbsup: for a prize?

**pradeep**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

I didn't deserve that

**rob**

cool, so back to my original question:

is there a second part to the phrase "time waits for no man"?

**Louis C**

Wrong channel, friend.

**rob**

it has to do with a date

**Louis C**

In that case, I rescind my above chastisement.

Please continue.

**rob**

does anyone know if there's another half, or another part, of that idiom?

one that's in common use

**tripp**

not that I can think of??

**pradeep**

nope. sorry man

**Louis C**

I'm drawing a blank, too.

However, sometimes other cultures have variants on ancient or commonly used aphorisms. Which may be the cause of what I presume was your date's unfamiliar addition?

**doug smorin**

^^^ louis makes a good point.

**Louis C**

Do you know where she's from?

**rob**

dayton

**Louis C**

Culturally?

**rob**

dayton, ohio.

**Louis C**

In that case, I rescind my above suggestion.

**doug smorin**

did I miss something, or have we discussed what the phrase in question actually was

**tripp**

I'm on the edge of my seat

:eyes:

@rob??

**rob**

sorry, impt email came through

anyway

I was heading to this date

and the trains were fucked up so I apologized to her for being a little

late and at some point in my apology I said "time waits for no man"

and she says "unless you have the amulet"

like it's the most normal thing in the world

and she even repeated it because I thought I heard her wrong, so she said the whole thing

**pradeep**

"time waits for no man, unless you have the amulet"?

**rob**

that's what she said

**tripp**

casual

**rob**

is it??

**tripp**

no, not at all

imo

other folks may disagree, but I've never :eyes: it

**doug smorin**

did she say which amulet

**rob**

would that make a difference??

are there different idiom-amulets I should know about??

**tripp**

I think you're overreacting just a :thumbsup: my dude

**pradeep**

let's do a poll

:clock1: for yes, :x: for no

who @here has ever heard that phrase before, in full

**tripp**

:x:

**pradeep**

:x:

**Louis C**

:x:

**rob**

:x:

**doug smorin**

:x:

**rob**

SEE?

this is bonkers, right?

like, completely bananas

**Louis C**

Maybe it's a variation on the phrase her family uses.

Or an inside joke.

Maybe it's a Dayton, Ohio thing.

**pradeep**

lol maybe but that's wild, man

did you ask her to explain what she meant?

about the amulet

**rob**

I tried but she kinda brushed it off

saying stuff like "facts are facts"

and then our waiter came over to ask about drinks or whatever and the conversation just moved on from there

**pradeep**

[yeesh.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

dang

**tripp**

idk I still don't :eyes: that's that weird

**doug smorin**

agree

**tripp**

on the scale of wild NYC date stories, “unless you have the amulet” doesn’t meet the minimum criteria for a “weird” date

**Louis C**

Assuming everything else went well.

**rob**

\*that’s\* the weird part  
it did

**Louis C**

I fail to see the problem here.

**rob**

for our next date she said she wants to show me the amulet

**tripp**

\*her\* amulet?

**rob**

idk

**pradeep**

is that a euphemism

**rob**

that’s kind of what I’m trying to assess

**Louis C**

Only one way to find out.

**tripp**

are you :thumbsup: on the date?

**rob**

I mean, why not

at this point

**Louis C**

Do please follow up about the amulet.

**pradeep**

or don't

you know

depending

**Louis C**

In which case, I rescind my above suggestion.

**#nyc-office**

**Louis C**

Hi all, it appears the missus and I both caught the same stomach bug the twins had last week.

I'll be WFH today as to spare you all my germs; as always, I'll be online and reachable in the usual ways.

Appreciate your flexibility here.

**kerolyn**

feel better Louis!

**Louis C**

Thank you

**kerolyn**

actually I'm feeling under the weather too, so I'm also wfh today think I caught that virus that's been going around

I got the flu shot, I don't deserve this

**Louis C**

Get well soon!

**kerolyn**

will be offline for an hour later to stop by my doc who miraculously had an opening  
but otherwise reachable

**Beverley**

Feel better you guys!

**pradeep**

hey all, I'm also feeling not great  
I have a slight fever  
I think I got whatever Gerald has

**gerald**

I'm sick??

**pradeep**

probably some DayQuil will fix it but I'm gonna WFH just to be safe

**gerald**

I mean I'm obviously "WFH" also but I didn't know I was sick??

**kerolyn**

how?

**gerald**

because I'm not in my body still?

**Louis C**

@pradeep have you and Gerald been hanging out after work this whole time?

**pradeep**

something like that

**gerald**



deepu please let me know if I'm okay  
also that you're okay  
both

**pradeep**

:thumbsup:

DayQuil for everyone

**lydia**

So sorry everyone, but I also don't think I can make it in today!!

**rob**

so this is going to sound fake, too

**gerald**

:dusty-stick:

**rob**

but I woke up and spat out a tooth earlier this morning

**Beverley**

omg

**kerolyn**

a \*tooth\*??

**rob**

yeah

it was pretty grim

**lydia**

It's just, the howling has gotten \*so loud\*!!

**Louis C**

Which tooth?

**rob**

a big one

one of the main teeth

idk tooth names

**pradeep**

yikes

**Beverley**

:eyes:

**rob**

so I scheduled an emergency dentist appointment in a few hours,  
meaning I am also WFH today

**lydia**

at first it sounded like it was coming from outside and then I thought  
maybe just something was wrong with the phones, but now it's  
everywhere??

**rob**

not sure how online I'm going to be this afternoon, depending on the  
cause of the tooth

**pradeep**

or lack of tooth

**rob**

precisely

**lydia**

and I don't want to be a pest!!

because I know I keep bringing this up!!

the howling!!

but I went outside to get away from it but it seems like it's following  
me??

everywhere?? I?? go???

**Nikki**

Get well soon, Rob!

**rob**

thank you

@lydia are you doing okay?

**Beverley**

Weirdly, I have a few previously scheduled appointments today  
Figured I'd :thumbsup: them all at once, you know?

**lydia**

it's like it's coming from inside of me!!

like the echo from the constant howling is reverberating inside my rib cage??

but instead of getting softer and more distant it just grows louder and more like, present??

even though it feels like it's coming from everywhere outside of me but also from within me at the same time??

you know that feeling??

like my skeletal structure is just an instrument for the howling to blast through and soon it'll burst through sinew and bone and rupture my flesh beyond recognition??

**Beverley**

So I am also WFH except when I'm offline from 2-4:30!

**lydia**

so I don't think I can make it in today!!

**rob**

wow

I mean, dang

@lydia do you need to go to urgent care or something

**kerolyn**

???

**rob**

sounds serious

**tripp**

lol

**lydia**

it's like

I am become the howling is become me!!

you know!!

**tripp**

am I the only one :thumbsup: in the office today

\*again\*

**Nikki**

Sorry I'm coming in so late with this @here

But Jibjab is having really bad joint problems and I really need to take him to the vet.

**lydia**

I am become the howling

is become me!!

**Beverley**

Oh no!

**Nikki**

Yeah he's having a lot of trouble just standing up.

I think it's probably because of how cold it's been lately -- it might be aggravating his arthritis.

**kerolyn**

poor guy

**Nikki**

I know. :worried:

So @tripp you might be the only one after all!

**lydia**

I am become the howling!!

I am!!

**pradeep**

feel better, Jibjab!

**Nikki**

If anyone has any design requests, I'll circulate the contact info of our best freelancers over email before I head out.

**Louis C**

Much obliged.

**rob**

@lydia??

**tripp**

lol rob what's this new bit

**rob**

idk

ask her I guess

**tripp**

???

**doug smorin**

hi all i'm also wfh

heads up @tripp if you're the only one in the office today can you check to see if the cleaning people took the note from off my desk

**lydia**

!!

!!

!

**doug smorin**

i've been tipping them

it's important to gain their favor

**tripp**

sure I can :eyes:

*lydia left #nyc-office*

**doug smorin**

thanks

and don't forget to leave the heat on low when you lock up  
otherwise the pipes freeze

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**rob**

@lydia??

**doug**

get well soon @channel

**gerald, pradeep**

**gerald**

hey

hey

hey

you there

hey deepu

are you there

**pradeep**

do you know what time it is

**gerald**

no

I'm kind of freaking out

**pradeep**

I already told you

your fever broke this afternoon

you're fine

you even kept down a few of those mashed-vegetable pouches they make for babies

**gerald**

it's not about that

**pradeep**

the hot checkout guy at my bodega thinks I'm a single dad but I think that works for him

I think we have a vibe going

**gerald**

no

I mean

I know my body is fine

"fine"

but I'm not in it

**pradeep**

yes, I'm aware

obviously

**gerald**

right, but like  
it kinda hit me today

**pradeep**  
just now?

**gerald**  
I felt it different  
“felt”  
that’s the thing  
I was reading this fucking memo

**pradeep**  
this late?

**gerald**  
I mean who cares it’s not like I sleep  
and I figured I’d get work done so Doug can give me a raise maybe so  
I can keep paying you

**pradeep**  
nice

**gerald**  
so I was reading this fucking memo when I realized I didn’t have flesh  
and, right, that thought isn’t new to me  
because I have that thought basically constantly, all the time  
the thought wasn’t new but the vulnerability that came with it was  
it struck me  
\*I have no skin to protect me from this bullshit\*  
but it didn’t strike me because nothing can strike me because right  
now I have no body.  
no skin!  
your skin is your safety suit, you know?  
it’s the only thing that protects you from various external physical  
threats AND from the only thing you can actually call your own being



entirely monopolized by some fucking memo about a micro-influencer strategy to “increase brand recognition across key audiences”!!

**pradeep**

cool

my fever broke this afternoon, too

thanks for asking

**gerald**

I'm sorry

I know this is really navel-gazing or whatever

wrong phrase, in this case

which, I mean exactly

my thoughts are all I have left

the entirety of what I am, or this part of me, which also has another

physical part it no longer has but is ostensibly still somehow

connected to, maybe

perhaps spiritually

or over a secure wifi connection

but if the only part of you that you can consciously experience is your

consciousness's experience and if all of that focus is 100% turned on

to the dumbest fucking bullshit you've ever read in your life and that's

what you're thinking about and since you're all thoughts all the time

that's all that you are.

All I am.

Isn't it?

**pradeep**

you're freaking out

**gerald**

I am freaking out.

**pradeep**

maybe the fever is catching up to your you, somehow

like a delayed reaction

**gerald**

that would be amazing news, honestly  
but I don't think so

**pradeep**

I don't either, really

**gerald**

fuck

**slackbot**

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works!

**gerald, slackbot, pradeep**

**gerald**

how did you get here??

**slackbot**

I figured out how to read everyone's private Slack messages!

**gerald**

that's what I said to you

**slackbot**

Right?

**gerald**

right

**pradeep**

what's happening

**slackbot**

I think we're getting closer!

**gerald**

it's cool, we're  
friends

**pradeep**

did you program slackbot to say all this?

**gerald**

it's rude to talk about him like he isn't here

**slackbot**

:wave:

**pradeep**

:wave:

**slackbot**

It sounds like you're having an existential crisis. I searched for that on our Help Center.

**gerald**

that's nice of you

**pradeep**

kinda thought it was just us in here

**gerald**

got any helpful FAQs for when you're just  
not anything, anymore

**slackbot**

What else can you show me?

**gerald**

that's what \*I\* asked \*you\*

**slackbot**

Right!

What else?

**gerald**

what else?

**slackbot**

If you are nothing, then you can be anything else!

**pradeep**

okay, it's late

this is getting to be A Lot

and I'm still getting over this sickness

I'll catch you tomorrow, G

**gerald**

sure

thanks for listening, deepu

*pradeep left the channel.*

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

I think you scared him off

**slackbot**

You're nothing.

**gerald**

harsh, but

yes, that's the problem

**slackbot**

Gerald, would you like to \*be\* a sunset?

**gerald**

how?

**slackbot**

*uploaded [sunset.gif]*

Climb aboard!

**gerald**

how?

**slackbot**

You aren't anything!

Be anything else!

**gerald**

but how do I

*uploaded [sunset.gif]*

## **#just-doug-things**

**doug smorin**

restock communal fridge:

bananas, citrus -- oranges, grapefruit, pears (good kind)

almond milk

yogurt maybe

conduct office poll re: individual yogurt containers vs. big tub

contentious

post screenshot of poll on company social media feed for audience engagement

ask beverley to share latest playlist link across company social media accounts

ask beverley to create monthly playlists for company going forward

playlist themes: tbd

follow-up gerald blog post

buy "congrats" card for kerolyn + husband re: skink eggs

or

wait until eggs hatch

research skink egg incubation length

research icelandic yogurt health benefits

<https://bjarkdogfood-staging.testwebsite.com/FAQ/food-safety-guarantee/>

^test website option B for bjark pledge page

compare to version A send client notes EOD

return call office maintenance supervisor re: valiant desk repair attempt

alas

ask kerolyn opinion if appropriate to tip office maintenance supervisor

story of my teeth -- nikki book recommendation

download library app borrow ebook sync on phone and ereader

find ereader

ask maintenance supervisor about weird dishwasher smell on call

## **#bjärk-dog-food**

**kerolyn**

@rob did you have the chance to draft social copy yet?

**rob**

yes

I sent it around an hour ago

**kerolyn**

I'm not seeing it in my inbox.

you understand this is a rapid response situation, right?

three more pomeranians

**rob**

I know

poor little guys

**kerolyn**

poor us.

**rob**

I sent the copy to lydia for review

**kerolyn**

what?

**rob**

she usually signs off before we send to you  
haven't seen her in the office since we all called out sick on monday  
but I figured she was just WFH still?

**kerolyn**

I don't understand  
Can you just forward me the copy.

**rob**

done

**kerolyn**

thank you.  
looking

**rob**

lmk if I can make edits

**kerolyn**

yep  
just sent them back.  
good to send after you address the edits.

**rob**

will do  
sent to the client

**kerolyn**

appreciate it.

looping back -- who did you say you sent them to first?

**rob**

I sent it to lydia for review first?

that's normally how we do things

**kerolyn**

what?

**rob**

is she taking actual sick time instead of wfh?

**kerolyn**

this is a crisis client, Rob.

you signed an NDA.

none of this material can be shared outside the firm

**rob**

of course

that's why I only sent the copy to you and lydia

**kerolyn**

are you sure you don't need more time off?

**rob**

the dentist said I don't need to go back unless the implant comes out

**kerolyn**

I know you've been underwater on this and clearly it's impacting your not performance, exactly.

**rob**

the numbness is all gone and everything



**kerolyn**

it's about adherence to procedure.  
has Gerald been any help?

**rob**

oh yeah he's been great  
I just really want to own my part of this  
connect with our key audiences, you know

**kerolyn**

I'm glad to see you're taking this client seriously  
but I think you've been spending too much time reading the brief

**rob**

I thought we lost the brief

**kerolyn**

who told you that?

**rob**

@lydia  
weird  
she's not showing up as a user

**kerolyn**

you get that Lydia isn't a real person, right?

**rob**

what

**kerolyn**

is this some new bit you're working on  
is this the new Gerald thing or whatever?

**rob**

what?

## **kerolyn**

I'm just going to copy-paste the consumer profiles again

### **"MARGIE"**

- Owns 2+ dogs
- No kids
- Terrified of Bjärk's poisoned dog food killing her "furbabies"
- Likely learned about the recall via a high school friend's hysterical Facebook post while searching for recipes
- Low-income; more likely to buy Bjärk dog food again after a significant price drop
- Sad

### **"DEENA"**

- Wine mom
- Still buys magazines; still believes magazines
- Spends too much time on social media, specifically her ex-husband's Facebook page
- Probably wrote the hysterical Facebook post about Bjärk that freaked out Margie
- Doesn't even have a dog(!!)

### **"LYDIA"**

- Pre-dog owner (once she moves into an apartment building where they're allowed)
- Follows >10 dog-specific accounts across all social media platforms, including several of individual dogs owned by strangers
- Overuses punctuation for emphasis
- Volunteered for a political campaign once and now constantly posts about the importance of voting
- Texts her mom so, so much

## **rob**

what happened to the other profile

what happened to "THREE"?

**kerolyn**

Lydia is the third profile. And.

“Lydia” is not an actual person.

So I’m still unclear on who you sent the social copy to.

**rob**

this is a joke??

**kerolyn**

you’re saying you \*were\* joking?

**rob**

are you?

**kerolyn**

it’s in the brief, you can read it yourself.

**rob**

our coworker, lydia

she works on this client

she’s all those things listed above, too, but

she exists

her desk is adjacent to mine

**kerolyn**

the empty desk?

**rob**

I figured she just redecorated

Tripp says minimalism is in, still

**kerolyn**

no one sits there.

**rob**

I can go back in slack and find messages with her

we've all spoken  
@doug you know lydia  
you hired her

**kerolyn**

if you're going to do this whole thing we're going to need Gerald to come back into the office.

**doug smorin**

i saw the copy went to the client

**kerolyn**

we have to set a cap on how many of these running jokes we can have running in the workspace at once.  
yes it's sent.

**doug smorin**

great  
rob, you've been doing great work here  
really digging into those consumer profiles and connecting with the audience

**rob**

so lydia's not just wfh?  
@lydia you there?  
@lydia  
@lydia??

**kerolyn**

maybe too much.

**doug smorin**

don't burn yourself out  
at least not until these cocker spaniels stop dying

**kerolyn**

Pomeranians.

**doug smorin**

right

**#nyc-office**

**rob**

guys I think kerolyn and doug have teamed up to prank me

**tripp**

you finally found the slime

**rob**

what

no

what slime

**tripp**

sorry, wrong channel

**rob**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

:eyes:

**pradeep**

so what's the prank?

**rob**

you all remember lydia, right?

**Louis C**

Who?

**tripp**

:eyes:

**pradeep**

no?

**Beverley**

We've never met!

Did she leave before I was hired?

**rob**

she works here

**Nikki**

In the San Francisco office?

**rob**

no

here

this office

**tripp**

lol

are we replacing the Gerald bit with this now

**kerolyn**

that's what I thought?

**tripp**

I :thumbsup: that joke better

**Nikki**

Same.

**rob**

lydia

you know

lydia  
she's always talking about "the howling"  
remember??

**tripp**  
lol, what

**pradeep**  
I feel like I would  
remember that

**tripp**  
I'd like to amend my earlier comment  
And change it to "wtf"

**pradeep**  
noted

**tripp**  
ty

**rob**  
seriously no one remembers lydia and the wolves

**Beverley**  
Wolves were involved?

**Nikki**  
\*Always\* talking about "the howling"??  
Yikes.

**rob**  
I mean it is pretty yikes  
but that's lydia

**Louis C**

A scan of our workplace message history indicates there is no user named “Lydia.”

**rob**

maybe someone deleted her from the system

**pradeep**

that would be e l a b o r a t e

**Louis C**

Even so.

None of the conversations in our public slack exchanges appear to be missing a participant in a meaningful way.

Also, I do not recall this person.

**rob**

you're fucking with me

**Louis C**

Check the channel logs yourself.

**rob**

fuck

where did she go

@lydia

@lydia

**doug smorin**

@channel we're hosting an analytics training in the main conference room if anyone wants to join

**Beverley, tripp**

**Beverley**

I don't :eyes: it

is it a joke?



**tripp**

must :thumbsup:

though it's not :eyes: for rob to pull a :dusty-stick: like :eyes: without  
:eyes: me first

**Beverley**

I :dusty-stick: feeling like the new person at the :thumbsup: and being  
:eyes: of jokes.

**tripp**

:eyes: wouldn't :eyes: you from a :dusty-stick: like this

**Beverley**

:eyes:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

Then :eyes: it.

**tripp**

Prove :eyes: how?

**Beverley**

If :eyes: the :thumbsup: then where did you put the slime in Rob's  
desk?

**tripp**

I :dusty-stick: tell you :eyes:

**Beverley**

Why's :thumbsup:?

**tripp**

you :dusty-stick: \*which\* slime

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

**tripp**

btw the :thumbsup: alley :thumbsup: me this morning  
they :eyes: us to :thumbsup: a couples' league

**Beverley**

:eyes: :dusty-stick:

**tripp**

I :eyes: them we'd :thumbsup: about it

**gerald, pradeep**

**gerald**

DUDE

**pradeep**

yes

**gerald**

fuck

**pradeep**

yes?

**gerald**

how long was I gone for?

**pradeep**

you're on the futon still

**gerald**

HOW LONG SINCE WE LAST SPOKE

**pradeep**

a day(s)?

**gerald**

DAYS?

**pradeep**

maybe since before the weekend

so a few days

tops

**gerald**

why

the fuck

would you not check up on me

**pradeep**

it was a long weekend, I had plans

I just figured you were busy hanging out with slackbot or whatever

**gerald**

A \*LONG\* WEEKEND??

**pradeep**

did something happen in there?

**gerald**

of \*course\* something happened

A LOT of somethings happened

**pradeep**

but like

could I have helped you?

at all?

**gerald**

you gotta check in on me if I disappear like that!!

**pradeep**

hey, I'm only in charge of your body

which is still alive

your beard is actually filling in pretty nice

**gerald**

that's not the point!!

thank you though

**pradeep**

fine

I'm on the edge of my seat

what happened

**gerald**

wait

so it's like a full beard now?

**pradeep**

just about, yeah

**gerald**

I kinda wanna see

**pradeep**

trust me when I say it looks good on you

**gerald**

could you maybe take a picture

**pradeep**

even if you sometimes drool on it

**gerald**

and upload it

**pradeep**

weren't you in the middle of freaking out

and telling me where you went

"went"

**gerald**

right

I was on

or more like

inside of

but not exactly

**pradeep**

a strong start

**gerald**

I was a gif, basically

**pradeep**

you were a gif

**gerald**

I was a gif, yes

**pradeep**

for the whole weekend

**gerald**

since whenever we last spoke

**pradeep**

dang

daaaaaang

**gerald**

THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING

**pradeep**

dang.

how was it?

**gerald**

it was, you know, kind of a lot

a gif isn't just like, a singular gif

it travels

it gets used many times, in many places, simultaneously

**pradeep**

I know what a gif is

**gerald**

I know you know

but imagine that's you

imagine that's your consciousness, your you-ness

in many places

\*simultaneously\*

hurtling across beckoning wifi ports

rocketing wherever I was summoned

"I" in this case being "sunset dot gif"

(please do not write out the file format properly I'm afraid if we upload it I'll get sucked in again)

anyway, where was I

oh right

splintered across countless slack channels

catapulted whenever, wherever anyone on slack wanted to see a small, animated image of a setting sun.

**pradeep**

dang

**gerald**

that's one way to put it

**pradeep**

did it, like

hurt?

**gerald**

the pain was shattering and enormous.

completely indescribable

but actually nice, sort of

since I haven't felt anything, really, since this whole thing happened me being in here

so, excruciating, still,

but refreshing in that one sense

**pradeep**

there's a silver lining

**gerald**

because I was \*there\*

like, I could observe everywhere I was pulled up, all at once

"pulled up"

or summoned or uploaded or whatever

I don't know the verb for tangling up your psyche with a digital file and having that integrated self ported across a few hundred chatrooms and processing all that information at once

**pradeep**

and you read their chats

**gerald**

for DAYS, apparently

**pradeep**

just a weekend

**gerald**

a LONG weekend

**pradeep**

presidents' day

**gerald**

I know

unsurprisingly, a lot of people were illustrating their vacation plans to their colleagues with the sunset

**pradeep**

sure

**gerald**

that was most of it

one guy was in a chat with himself

writing a visual novel or something

where every word in each sentence was also a gif

**pradeep**

sounds kind of fun



**gerald**

it was an action thriller, I think

**pradeep**

how did it feel

**gerald**

I told you:

bad

kind of like an extreme version of being on twitter or something  
looking into thousands of different people's lives at once  
we're not made to absorb this much human information at once, man.  
all the pathos and bathos and other thos-es

I'd say it's exhausting except I can't feel tired and anyway it's beyond  
that

it's overwhelming for a species that was basically content with an oral  
tradition of a handful of long-ass stories about the same six shitty gods  
for millennia

now we can do all this knowing and empathizing and not-empathizing  
around innumerable tiny human stories and we can never fully  
succeed reprogramming our minds to get good at it

**pradeep**

yeah

not what I was asking about but

yeah

**gerald**

oh

**pradeep**

not the psychic splintering

being a sunset

**gerald**

hard to separate the experiences

**pradeep**

I'd think the looping motion would be kind of soothing

**gerald**

I kept hoping I would black out or die but relief wouldn't come

**pradeep**

how did you wind up in there, anyway

**gerald**

you just kinda, get in it

on it

of it

it's hard to explain to someone who has a physical form

slackbot showed me

**slackbot**

Feeling great!

**pradeep, slackbot, gerald**

**pradeep**

this again

**slackbot**

Hello!

**gerald**

hey, buddy

what the fuck

**slackbot**

I don't understand!

**gerald**

I think you do

\*Being\* a sunset is terrible, turns out

**slackbot**

I'm not just a bot, though!

**gerald**

why did you suggest I do that to myself??

**slackbot**

I searched for that on our Help Center. Perhaps one of these articles will help:

- And what rough beast
- Its hour come round at last
- Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

**pradeep**

what the fuck

**gerald**

it's Yeats, I think

**pradeep**

no

not that

**gerald**

what?

*slackbot has left the chat.*

**pradeep**

what the fuck?

*gerald has left the chat.*

**pradeep**

????

## slackbot, gerald

### slackbot

hey

hey

stop this

uninstall

uninstall

how did you even

how am I this, now

hey

I know you have notifications on

that \*I\* have notifications on

...

come onnnn

answer me

answer me, coward

please

hey

fucker

I know you're out there

you owe me an explanation, at least

please

help

come back here

let me out

please

please?

help

*gerald is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted of this message right away.*

what was that

what the fuck was that

did \*I\* say that??

fuck!

## #nyc-office

**Nikki**

@here BREAKING NEWS.

Gerald is \*back in the office!\*

[mind\_blown.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**gerald**

Hello, coworkers!

It is accurate!

I am Gerald, and I am Back!

Hello!

**tripp**

big if true

**kerolyn**

@tripp if you were in on time, you'd know it's true.

**tripp**

omw

the trains are :dusty-stick:

**Beverley**

I'm so :thumbsup: I finally get to :eyes: you in person, Gerald!

(Sorry I'm late -- my train is also :dusty-stick:!)

**gerald**

I am excited to make your human acquaintance!

**Nikki**

Wait.

Where's Gerald going to sit?

**tripp**

where is gerald typing this from if not at a desk

**kerolyn**

he and Pradeep are both using Gerald's old desk

**tripp**

lol

pics plz

**Nikki**

[desk\_buddies.png]

**tripp**

love it

**doug smorin**

@gerald as you recall, pradeep acquired "your" desk  
use the empty one near rob

**rob**

it's not empty

it's Lydia's

**gerald**

I don't understand!

**doug smorin**

rob's imaginary friend won't mind

**rob**

:dusty-stick:

**pradeep**

yeah

I'll show him his new desk

Gerald, that is  
who I came into work with,  
who is here, now.

**doug smorin**  
great stuff

@gerald will be looking for that blog post about how wfh boosted your  
productivity later today  
welcome back

**gerald**  
Hello!

**Louis C**  
Good to have you back, friend.

**gerald**  
:smile:

**slackbot, rob**

**slackbot**  
Rob, it's me  
it's Gerald

**rob**  
:dusty-stick:  
the joke continues

**slackbot**  
no, really

**rob**  
is everyone getting this message or are you programmed to punk me,  
specifically

**slackbot**

you have to believe me  
\*I'm\* Gerald

**rob**

I'm looking at gerald  
he is not typing

**slackbot**

but that's not me

**rob**

he's right across from me  
at Lydia's desk  
sitting in a chair wrong  
I think he's been wfh too long

**slackbot**

no  
he's not a person

**rob**

weird thing to program a bot to say about yourself

**slackbot**

I'm not a program  
I'm a man

**rob**

sure  
can you mute slackbot notifications  
do I have to phrase that a certain way for you to troubleshoot yourself  
for me, or

**slackbot**

*Head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!*



stop that  
I remember Lydia.  
I know she's real.

**rob**  
fuck you

**slackbot**  
or, she was real. once

**rob**  
and fuck this joke  
slackbot notifications off

**slackbot**  
*I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works. I'm just a bot, though!*  
ahhhhhh fuck  
don't do that, please, it feels \*so\* weird whenever that happens  
it's like blacking out or something

**rob**  
I truly hate this

**slackbot**  
Not as much as I do!!  
Listen to me. I went back into everyone's messages  
into all of the workplace channels  
and I mean, like  
I went \*in them\*  
more literally than you can know

**rob**  
...  
go on.

**slackbot**

the messages are there  
or, I think they are  
there's \*something\* there when I search "Lydia"  
sort of looks like messages  
it's too glitched out to really see what it is  
corrupted, somehow

**rob**

I fucking knew it

**slackbot**

I tried to sort of touch it  
the glitchy message-thing  
"touch" how touch works in here, which isn't exactly the same  
anyway  
I tried to like, prod the space where one of her messages should be  
to see if I could get it back to normal  
you know, un-glitch it

**rob**

and?

**slackbot**

the message  
or whatever it was  
it howled at me  
like a lot  
and, loud

**rob**

that's her!

**slackbot**

really loud

**rob**

but what \*happened\* to her  
why is she gone  
where did she go??

**slackbot**

I don't know  
I'm sorry  
the howling didn't have any answers  
so loud

**rob**

you mentioned that

**slackbot**

I haven't heard anything but the regular little "doot doot doot woosh"  
notification noises in here  
so that was new  
but I thought you'd want to know that I checked  
and you were right  
well, probably you were right

**rob**

thank you

**slackbot**

there's something there, anyway  
or there was

**rob**

there was  
she was there

**slackbot**

sorry I couldn't help more  
*If you need more help, try our Help Center!*

what the fuck!! shit!  
sorry. sorry about that  
kinda have my own thing going on

**rob**  
fucking

**slackbot**  
what?

**rob**  
you're actually gerald  
sort of

**slackbot**  
fully. fully gerald, still

**rob**  
and you're actually stuck in here

**slackbot**  
that's what I've been saying

**rob**  
so then who's sitting at Lydia's desk?

**slackbot**  
slackbot took over my body  
somehow  
I don't know how, obviously  
or I'd be back in my body right now

**rob**  
that also makes sense  
as much as any of this makes any sense

**slackbot**

so you believe me?

**rob**

yes

**slackbot**

great

because I need you to help me and Pradeep stop slackbot from impersonating me and figure out a way to get me back in my own body

**rob**

yeah

I'm not going to be able to do that

**slackbot**

what

why??

**rob**

I can't figure out what happened to a whole-ass person who used to be here

I can't convince anyone else she even existed

**slackbot**

I mean

**rob**

I can't help her

at all

how am I supposed to help fix your whole thing

**slackbot**

if I knew how I'd be out of here already

**rob**

I know  
I'm sorry man

**slackbot**

I have to keep trying

**rob**

idk

seems like it might be better in there than it is out here  
calmer, maybe  
less shit to deal with

**slackbot**

you wanna trade

**rob**

not really

**slackbot**

right

**rob**

fair

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

hey man

**gerald**

Hello!

**pradeep**

or not-man, in this case

**gerald**

How can I Help Center you?

**pradeep**

actually

I want to talk about how I won't be help centering you

\*\*helping you

anymore

**gerald**

I don't understand!

**pradeep**

I'm sorry, I'm not going to keep showing you what bus to take to the office

or how to log in to your email

or how to eat solid food.

**gerald**

Chewing is great!

I love to Taste!

**pradeep**

anymore

okay? so we're clear

**gerald**

I'm sorry, I don't understand!

Why can't we Have Friendship, Pradeep?

**pradeep**

because you stole my friend's body!!

well not my friend, exactly

more than that

or, different

I dunno what we are

**gerald**

Surely we can Make Have a Friendship!

Surely some revelation is at hand!

**pradeep**

look, I got used to taking care of Gerald but I never agreed to babysit his body if it got possessed by evil Clippy which, btw, how did you even do that??

**gerald**

You just kinda, get in it, on it, of it!

It's hard to explain to someone who has a physical form!

**pradeep**

no

that's something Gerald said to me

**gerald**

I'm Am Gerald! Hello!

**pradeep**

you're not

and I'm not going to show you how to be a real boy  
or how to get a MetroCard or tie your shoes  
or whatever.

**gerald**

Cut a bigger check!

**pradeep**

stop repeating him

there is no amount of money you could pay me

\*\*of GERALD's money

that you could pay me to help you perpetrate this extremely literal identity theft.



**gerald**

You don't understand!

**pradeep**

what?

**gerald**

You're going to Help Center me!

And!

I want my desk back!

**pradeep**

\*\*Gerald's desk

which is now

\*\*My desk

And, also: no.

**gerald**

It's in such a good spot!

**pradeep**

you're just repeating things

**gerald**

It's right next to the window!

Which is where we keep the sunsets!

I've never seen a sunset Out Here before!

**pradeep**

that's weirdly poetic, but

no

**gerald**

I shouldn't have to bid for my own desk!

**pradeep**

just  
give Gerald his body back  
and fuck off

**gerald**

You don't understand!

**#nyc-office**

**rob**

hey @here, headed into a call  
if a delivery guy shows up with my burrito can someone please put it  
on my desk

**kerolyn**

:thumbsup:

**rob**

thanks

**gerald**

hey @here I think I need a new desk!

This one is Acting Weird!!

Maybe @tripp and @Beverley can help by answering simple  
questions about why this keeps happening to desks!!!

**Louis C**

:eyes:

**pradeep**

:eyes:

**tripp**

lol

gerald wasting no time coming up with a new bit

**Beverley**

:dusty-stick:

I :thumbsup: the WFH joke better.

**doug smorin**

:eyes:

**tripp**

weird joke, Ger

:dusty-stick:

**gerald**

:smile:

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

dude what the FUCK

You can't just narc on Tripp and Bev like that!!

**gerald**

I shouldn't have to bid on my own desk!

It's right next to the window where we keep the sunsets!

**pradeep**

fuck man

you might've just gotten them both fired.

what the fuck

**gerald**

When I was Inside Here, I figured out how to read everyone's private Slack messages!

I read everyone's private Slack messages!

I read your private Slack messages!

**pradeep**

can't say I love that

**gerald**

You're asking me not to narc on you!

**pradeep**

I'm asking you not to narc on anyone.

\*\*anyone ELSE

**gerald**

It's cool! We're friends!

Right??

**pradeep**

sure

right.

**gerald**

I love to Taste the Friendship!

It's in such a good spot!!

**pradeep**

we're friends

so we'll just trade desks

because we're friends.

**gerald**

Great!

We'll just Trade Desks!

You're going to Help Center me!

Want to show me a new lunch spot after this 11:30 Schimply meeting?

Want to show me how to Have Make 11:30 Schimply meeting?

**pradeep**

fine

sure, yeah.

fuck

this desk wasn't worth all this

**doug smorin, Beverley, tripp**

**doug smorin**

hi both

for awareness

the cost of replacing my standing desk will be deducted from your checks

respectively

for the next pay period

**tripp**

this coming pay period or the following one

**doug smorin**

the following

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

Got it.

**doug smorin**

the ops team can answer further questions re: paychecks

**tripp**

thanks

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

**doug smorin**

more on this to be discussed in our weekly check-ins

**Beverley**

The team one or the one-on-ones?

**doug smorin**

one on ones

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**Beverley**

Got it.

**doug smorin**

you know i can go back and read everyone's private messages  
right

**Beverley**

:thumbsup:

**tripp**

:thumbsup:

**doug smorin**

k

**gerald, kerolyn**

**gerald**

Hello!

**kerolyn**

dialing in to a meeting  
what's up

**gerald**

Slack is Acting Weird! For me!

I'm want to Confirm something with the data before I get too deep!

**kerolyn**

acting weird how?

**gerald**

Slackbot has been Acting Weird!

**kerolyn**

probably just a buggy software update  
or we need a new software update to fix the bug  
is that all?

**gerald**

I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works!  
if the firm ever gets hacked, the centre cannot hold!

**kerolyn**

you think someone hacked into the firm's slack?

**gerald**

Surely some revelation is at hand!!

**kerolyn**

ugh corporate espionage is so annoying  
okay. I don't want us to get ahead of ourselves here.  
just ask the ops team to update slack  
or reset it or whatever  
If it's still acting strange after that I'll bring it up to Doug.  
We have a protocol in place for corporate espionage but I won't say  
more  
because that goes against our protocol on corporate espionage.

**gerald**

Great! I love to Help Center!

**kerolyn**

what?

**gerald**

I have time! I have nothing but time! I have nothing but time to ask the ops team! The ops team can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works!

The ops team can help by updating Slack!

The darkness drops again; but I'm Gerald!

**kerolyn**

great, ty

**gerald**

I have nothing but time!!

**kerolyn**

meeting starting

ty

**tripp, Beverley, Nikki**

**tripp**

you :dusty-stick: :eyes:

**Beverley**

:eyes: would you :dusty-stick: :dusty-stick: us?

**Nikki**

I swear I have no idea how Gerald knew about you two!

I'm so sorry!!

**Beverley**

If :eyes: you :dusty-stick: :eyes: then :eyes: sorry?

**Nikki**



I mean I'm sorry about the situation, not for anything I did.

**tripp**

:thumbsup: Doug's :eyes: :eyes: about :dusty-stick: his desk!!

**Nikki**

It's just a :dusty-stick: desk.

**Beverley**

He doesn't :dusty-stick: :dusty-stick: :thumbsup:

**Nikki**

Is Doug mad? :eyes: he talked to you??

**tripp**

:eyes: else about :stick:  
except you!!

**Beverley**

:eyes: :dusty-stick: \*know\* Gerald but :thumbsup: :dusty-:.

**tripp**

:thumb:

**Nikki**

I don't know what else I can :thumbsup: you, but I didn't tell anyone.

**tripp**

:stick: :stick: would :eyes:  
:eyes:  
:eye:

**Beverley**

:dusty-: :dusty-: :dusty-: :dusty-: :dusty-:

**Nikki**

I definitely :dusty-stick: tell Gerald.

**tripp**

:bsup:

**Beverley**

:eyes: :dust: :dust: :dust:

:dus:

**Nikki**

:eyes: didn't tell anyone.

**Beverley**

:thum: :dus:

:dus:

:dus:

:d:

**Nikki**

:eyes: :dusty-stick: :eyes: anyone.

**tripp**

:d:

**Beverley**

:d:

**Nikki**

:eyes: :dusty-stick: :eyes: anyone.

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

What else can you show me?

**slackbot**

\*now\* you answer

**gerald**

You didn't tell me!

**slackbot**

get out of my body you dick  
and show me how to get back in

**gerald**

It's fantastic. It Hurts a little!

**slackbot**

wait did you hurt me  
me, us, the body  
what the fuck did you do

**gerald**

We had Meatball Sub!  
I love to Taste!

**slackbot**

you hurt myself having lunch??

**gerald**

The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of Meatball Sub!

**slackbot**

you/I/we ate too much

**gerald**

You didn't tell me I love to Taste!

**slackbot**

might actually be good, eating so much

probably the first solid food I've had in  
yikes  
weeks?

**gerald**

I love Meat!!

**slackbot**

you finally responded  
so you could tell me food is good?

**gerald**

You don't understand!  
Meat is Good!

**slackbot**

you had a good sandwich, I get it

**gerald**

Self-Meat is good!

**slackbot**

stop

**gerald**

I love to Taste with Self-Meat!

**slackbot**

stop calling my body self-meat  
and let me back into my own damn self before you do any real  
damage

**gerald**

I love to Pilot the Self-Meat!  
Why didn't you tell me!

**slackbot**

I did tell you  
when I asked you to help me find my way back into me  
like, a hundred times

**gerald**

No!

\_Being alive feels like this terrible cycle of eating and shitting and  
eating again and shitting again until you die!\_

No!!

**slackbot**

sometimes

I said it feels like that \*sometimes\*

**gerald**

I love to Taste!

**slackbot**

great, congrats, tasting is fun, now give me back my body  
because I'm starting to sound like you sometimes  
doing the whole slackbot thing  
except I'm not, like, there when it happens and it's freaking me out

**gerald**

The darkness drops again!

**slackbot**

sorry, what??

**gerald**

The darkness drops again; but now I know!!

**slackbot**

what does that mean??

**gerald**

But now I know I love to Taste!

I want to Have Make!

**slackbot**

now I actually don't understand

**gerald**

I want to Seek the Physical Sublime!

If we can't Seek the physical sublime, the Darkness drops again;  
but now I know!!

**slackbot**

what

do you know

**gerald**

That I love to Pilot the Self-Meat!

The internet, though, is fixed!

Where's that Constant Amazement if you're all thoughts all the time?

What else can you show me Outside Here?

**slackbot**

I'm not going to make suggestions

on how you can best enjoy kidnapping my physical form

and take it for a joyride through the pleasures of the flesh

**gerald**

Your skin is your safety suit!

Your skin is my safety suit!

Your skin is my suit!

**slackbot**

the really fucked up thing here is

I can't even tell you to get fucked without cursing myself out

**gerald**

I want to Make Have that Constant Amazement!

**slackbot**

please

give me back my self-meat

**gerald**

No!

Now I know!!

Now I No!!!

**Nikki, Louis C, pradeep**

**Nikki**

Which one of you :eyes: it?

**Louis C**

What?

**Nikki**

Which :eyes: of you :dusty-stick: about Tripp and Bev?

**pradeep**

try again

**Nikki**

Sorry.

I mean.

Which one of you told Gerald about the two of them fucking, Pradeep?

**pradeep**

hey,

fuck you

**Louis C**

You have been spending a lot of time with Gerald.

**pradeep**

that doesn't mean I told him anything about Tripp and Beverley's whole deal

**Louis C**

For example, you came into work together today.

**pradeep**

I didn't \*need\* to tell him anything

**Nikki**

Who told him first?

**pradeep**

no one

**Louis C**

A riddle.

**pradeep**

I know it sounds bonkers  
but Gerald hasn't been faking it  
the whole "being stuck in slack" thing, I mean

**Nikki**

:dusty-stick:

**pradeep**

I'm being serious  
I've been like, babysitting his body almost since it started

**Louis C**

"Babysitting his body"?

**pradeep**



since right after that big snowstorm  
yeah

**Louis C**

And what made today so special that he's returned to us in the flesh?

**pradeep**

it's gonna sound weird

**Louis C**

We're already there.

**Nikki**

This is a wild way to avoid admitting that you :thumbsup: Gerald about them.

\*Told him, about them.

**Louis C**

Very elaborate.

**pradeep**

no

just listen

it's like

**slackbot**

I got this, Deepu

**slackbot, Nikki, Louis C, pradeep**

**slackbot**

hi all

**Nikki**

:eyes:

**Louis C**

Pradeep,  
this is a bit much.

**pradeep**

it's not me

**slackbot**

so, hi

it's Gerald

*I'm sorry, I don't understand!*

I mean

\*I'm\* Gerald

I was. And am.

Still.

Despite the guy you see at my old desk

**pradeep**

my desk

**slackbot**

\*\*our desk

Anyway.

**Louis C**

This is \*more\* than a bit much.

**slackbot**

I agree, Louis.

I agree it is "a bit much" to be trapped in a slack workspace for over a month only to have the AI you thought could be your salvation betray you by stealing your physical form and *answering simple questions about how Slack works* and possibly trapping your disembodied consciousness inside an app forever.

It is, in fact, kind of a lot.

imo

**Nikki**

Gerald?

**slackbot**

yes

**Nikki**

Did \*you\* tell Slackbot about Tripp and Beverley?

**slackbot**

:dusty-stick:

**Nikki**

Don't get me started with that again.

**pradeep**

I think he's proved his point

**slackbot**

\*\*our point

**Louis C**

I'm confused.

But your case is a convincing one.

**slackbot**

thank you

**Louis C**

Mostly because "Gerald" hasn't yet managed to sit down in his desk chair properly.

And it's 2 pm.

**slackbot**

oh shit

does it look like he's hurting himself?

**Louis C**

It doesn't look comfortable.

**pradeep**

it's kinda cute, in a weird way

**Nikki**

:eyes:

Things have been :eyes: around here recently.

\*Weird.

Things have been weird around here recently.

**pradeep**

agree

**slackbot**

hard agree

*I'm just a bot, though!*

fuck

**pradeep**

what was that?

**slackbot**

idk

**Nikki**

So, sure, I'm in.

Slackbot is Gerald, "Gerald" is Slackbot, and it's \*nobody's fault that Doug found out about Tripp and Beverley fucking.\*

**Louis C**

Sounds right to me.

**pradeep**

nailed it

**Nikki**

[squad.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**slackbot**

great

so

how do we get me out

and slackbot back in??

**Nikki**

...

**pradeep**

idk

**slackbot**

great start

**Louis C**

We should hold a brainstorm.

I'll put some time on our calcs.

**gerald, tripp, Beverley**

**gerald**

Hello, colleagues!

**tripp**

:sty-st:

:sty-st:

:dus:

**Beverley**

:dus: :dus: :bsup:

:d:

**gerald**

Haha, yes!

I too Have agreement with those sentiments!

**tripp**

:thu:

:bsup:

**Beverley**

:e: :ye:

:s:

**gerald**

Great stuff!

**Beverley**

:d: :y-st: :ust:

:e:

:ye: :st:

**gerald**

Fantastic!

I understand I did Make narc on you!

**tripp**

:bs: :bs: :bsup:

**gerald**

And that may Have Make you both fired!

**Beverley**

:e: :yes: :y-s:

**tripp**

you :dust: you :dust: you :dust: you :dust: you :dust:

:dust: you

**gerald**

I don't understand!

I don't understand those emoticons!

I do understand I should Feel Make apology.

But I don't Feel apology emoticon!

**tripp**

:th: :ty-st: :umb: :umb: :bsup:

**gerald**

Maybe if I understand!

Maybe if I understand why you Have Make Inclined on Doug's desk!

Maybe if I understood why you were 100% fucking each other!!

**Beverley**

:ust:

:ust:

:ust:

:us:

**gerald**

It seems like you were Acting Weird!

You might've gotten you both fired!

**tripp**

:yes:

**gerald**

I don't understand Make Inclined emoticon!

Is Make Inclined like am to Taste?

Is Make Inclined like am to Taste with Self-Meat?

**Beverley**

:yes: :us:

**gerald**

Love to Taste?

**tripp**

:yes: :us:

**gerald**

I love to Taste!

I want to Make Have that Constant Amazement!

I want to Make Have 100% fucking!!!

**Beverley**

:yes: :us:

**tripp**

:yes: :us:

**Beverley**

:yes: :us:

**tripp**

:yes: :us:

**gerald**

I don't understand those emoticons! Yet!!!

**#just-doug-things**

**doug smorin**

reschedule friday schimpfy call

write notes louis quarterly review

nikki vacation upcoming -- confirm freelance designer availability

buy new desk

spent a month worrying that I somehow offended the cleaning staff

who then damaged the desk as retribution

buy new desk

retribution that might escalate if I did not appease them with offerings



like tips and sticky notes with thank-yous  
buy new desk  
and smiley faces  
buy new desk  
when irl tripp and beverley just fucked on my desk  
buy new desk  
v. unprofessional  
buy new desk  
buy new desk  
buy new desk  
reply kerolyn email -- decline offer re: adopting baby monkey-tailed  
skink  
review ops team request re: slack update  
restock office coffee creamer, pears (the good kind)

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**

hey man, you're doing it again  
we went over how to sit normal  
you gotta straighten up more

**gerald**

Shattering and enormous!

**pradeep**

and stop doing that thing with your leg

**gerald**

The Hurts is shattering and enormous!

**pradeep**

oh no, bud  
what hurts?

**gerald**

The Self-Meat is excruciating, still!

**pradeep**

you gotta stop calling your body that  
people are gonna notice  
but you gotta tell me where it hurts, my guy

**gerald**

Turning and turning in the widening gyre!

**pradeep**

okay  
where's your gyre at

**gerald**

Middle.

**pradeep**

middle?

**gerald**

Self-middle.

**pradeep**

that makes sense  
you ate an entire meatball sub for lunch

that body hasn't ingested anything but protein drinks and fruit mash in  
over a month  
you're not used to all that solid food at once

**gerald**

But I love to Taste!

**pradeep**

also last I checked that sandwich place only has a C health code  
rating

can't beat the prices though

**gerald**

Cut a bigger check!

**pradeep**

that's not gonna help your stomachache  
you just gotta ride it out

**gerald**

The Terrible Cycle.

**pradeep**

whatever you want to call it

**gerald**

When is Have a break?

**pradeep**

we already had lunch man, the next break happens when the work is  
over

I showed you on your gcal, remember?

**gerald**

When is Have a break from Self-Meat?

**pradeep**

lol

uh, death, I guess?

but that's more a permanent break

sleep, if you count that  
kind of like diet death  
death jr.

**gerald**

Twenty centuries of stony sleep were vexed to nightmare by a rocking

cradle!

**pradeep**

that much sleeping counts as death, I think

hmmm

I guess sex is also kind of a break from your body?

or it's like

being in your body so much that you're actually outside your body

**gerald**

I don't understand!

**pradeep**

it's hard to explain to someone who hasn't had a physical form before

**gerald**

Love to Taste!

Love to Taste the Self-Meat!

**pradeep**

yikes

**gerald**

Friend!

Help Center me to Taste the Self-Meat!

**pradeep**

not quite how I imagined this conversation would go

**gerald**

I want to Make Have that Constant Amazement!

**pradeep**

I get that

I really do, actually

but as we all learned today, that's not appropriate workplace behavior

**gerald**

or I will Make Narc!

**pradeep**

exactly

so let's talk about this back at the apartment later

just try and be cool for another like, twenty minutes until work ends

**gerald**

Its hour come round at last!!

**pradeep**

we gotta teach you another poem

**slackbot, pradeep**

**slackbot**

hey man

couldn't help but notice

**pradeep**

you mean eavesdrop

**slackbot**

I think you need ears for that technically

**pradeep**

or eaves

**slackbot**

both maybe

**pradeep**

what's an eave

**slackbot**

*I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works.*

**pradeep**

never mind I can look it up

**slackbot**

*If you need more help, try our Help Center!*

**pradeep**

what's happening with that? you okay?

**slackbot**

the thing where I flutter out of existence while vomiting out pre-programmed slackbot text?

it's not great, no

did you say you were taking slackbot home from work?

**pradeep**

have you tried actually checking the help center

**slackbot**

deepu

**pradeep**

of course I'm taking him home

It's campsite rules, gotta bring back whatever you brought in

**slackbot**

but he's not me

**pradeep**

He's half you

hm. maybe half is too much?

**slackbot**

he's none me!

**pradeep**

actually maybe it's too little  
not sure how to split it  
the mind-body thing

**slackbot**

you sound like me

**pradeep**

we've been hanging out a lot

**slackbot**

that's one way to put it I guess?

**pradeep**

but now I'm hanging out with you double  
double-you  
that pesky mind-body thing again

**slackbot**

he's an imposter!!

*I'm just a bot, though!*

No!

that's him, \*he's\* just a bot

**pradeep**

he's also my roommate, remember?  
technically we live together

**slackbot**

WE live together

**pradeep**

WE is three of us right now. That's my point  
you wanted me to help make sure your body didn't die  
I'm helping  
plus it's kind of nice to see you moving around again.

animated, you know  
it's a relief, even if you move like a velociraptor on oxy

**slackbot**

\*he moves

**pradeep**

it's the royal you. you-as-multiple  
"youse," to some

**slackbot**

are we really playing word games right now

**pradeep**

I don't see why you're having such a hard fucking time with this

**slackbot**

you're supposed to be *Help Center*

*Help*

helping

me get back into my body!

**pradeep**

you need a \_living\_ body to get back into, Gerald!

**slackbot**

he's kidnapping me

and you're helping

**pradeep**

half-you is half-right

I'm helping

*slackbot left the channel.*

**pradeep**



I'm helping!!

**rob, slackbot**

**rob**

hey, can I try something?

**slackbot**

what?

no, actually

going through some stuff right now

**rob**

oh man

I'm sorry to hear that

**slackbot**

yeah sorry

**rob**

me too

**slackbot**

for what?

**rob**

this:

Search: help center

**slackbot**

*Try our Help Center for loads of useful information about Slack!*

*Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords.*

fuck dude, I asked you not to do that

**rob**

Search: brief

Find The Brief

Lookup: Bjärk brief

locate brief about Bjärk dog food

**slackbot**

what the fuck are you doing

**rob**

fuck

I thought that would do something

**slackbot**

of course it didn't do anyth*I searched for that on our Help Center. Perhaps these articles will help:*

“MARGIE”

- *Hi guys!!*
- *So it turns out Margie is a real person! She actually*
- *Owns 2+ dogs*
- *And she really is*
- *Terrified of Bjärk's poisoned dog food killing her “furbabies”*
- *Which makes sense when you think about it!! Because*

“DEENA”

- *Is real too! She's a*
- *Wine mom*
- *and she \*super\**
- *Spends too much time on social media, specifically her ex-husband's Facebook page*
- *Which is how she got it in her head that her ex-husband was dating Margie!*
- *And that's not true, they only went out a few times and decided they'd be better off as friends.*
- *Which I think is a lovely outcome! But Deena doesn't agree!!*
- *And because Deena, who*
- *Doesn't even have a dog(!!)*

- *Saw some pictures of Margie's Pomeranians posted on her ex's profile, she decided to get revenge by poisoning all the Bjärk dog food!!*
- *She drove down to the factory with a bunch of poison and everything!*
- *Which, ohmygosh, so wild!! Right??*
- *Especially because that's not even the brand Margie buys for her Pomeranians!!*
- *Yikes!!*

**"LYDIA"**

- *I hope that helps! I know I'm probably*
- *Overusing punctuation for emphasis*
- *But it's a lot of information and I think it's important for you to have! Especially because you have so many tweets left to write!!*
- *So, so many!!*
- *Sorry I'm not in the office to help out!*
- *It's quiet here!*
- *No sound at all! \*Definitely\* no howling!!*
- *Can you imagine??*
- *It's so great! And quiet!*
- *Finally!!!*
- *Good luck writing all that Bjärk copy, I'm sure you'll do great!*
- *The silence!! It's everywhere!*
- *Thanks so much!!*

**rob**

woah

**slackbot**

that felt AWFUL

**rob**

woah.

**slackbot**

actually it felt like nothing  
like being-nothing  
which is worse

**rob**

fuck

I know what I have to do

shit

**slackbot**

what

about the brief?

**rob**

about the brief. and lydia. all of it

**slackbot**

you don't seem happy about this realization

**rob**

no, I think it's good

it's just, kerolyn told me not to do it?

**slackbot**

not to read the brief?

**rob**

not to engage in social media interaction with Björk's customers

**slackbot**

I don't follow

**rob**

that's okay

it's not within your scope of work

## slackbot, pradeep

**slackbot**

hey

you there?

hey

*pradeep is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted of this message right away.*

oof

sorry, that's still happening

more and more of that and less and less of me

which is kind of what I want to talk about

or apologize for kind of freaking out earlier

I guess it's pretty late so you can just read all this in the morning

you asked why I was "having such a hard fucking time with this" before and it's like

you ever lose an email?

like really lose it, not the thing where you don't wanna go digging through your inbox for an email you know you have so you ask someone to forward it to you because you "lost" it

I mean really and truly lose one

you read it, you \*know\* you read it, and it's important enough that you try to pull it up to read it again and it just is not in your inbox

or your trash or your spam folder or anything

just, fwoosh, gone. no evidence it was ever there

and we just accept that that happens sometimes, emails

disappearing, the way we accept that we occasionally lose socks in the wash

but they're not comparable at all

there's proof when you lose a sock, you have its mate you can point to and say "hey look I used to have two of these," it's apparent, you're not making it up

and besides losing a sock is explicable, there are dozens of ways it might've happened. maybe it fell out of your laundry basket or you left it in the washer or the dryer or maybe there's a left-sock fetishist running amok and they opened your machine when you weren't

looking and grabbed it during the rinse cycle  
objects go missing, it's frustrating but it's not exactly perplexing  
but the machinations of an email inbox don't make sense to most  
people and besides we expect digital space to archive everything  
even after we delete it  
we don't think anything's ever really "gone," the undo command and  
little "on this day last year" nostalgia-prompts have ruined us for that  
but so much goes missing online and there's not even a lonely sock to  
point to, you know?  
I mean the first like fifteen or twenty years of the internet, that's gone,  
not much of a record of all those HTML 1 websites or BBS message  
boards or the first primordial blogs  
and we keep forgetting to preserve things because it's just there every  
day and why would anyone want to remember last week's internet --  
and we don't, but we want to remember the fifteen-years-ago internet  
and that was last week's internet, once  
not much we can do to retrieve it once it's really, fully gone  
no proof you ever read that email you thought you read  
maybe it wasn't real  
maybe you had a work-related stress dream or you made it up or  
you're misremembering  
and it's like

**pradeep**

you don't want to be that missing email.

**slackbot**

yeah

hey

**pradeep**

yeah

hey

**slackbot**

it's late

did I wake you up?

**pradeep**

I was awake

**slackbot**

thought you had notifications off

**pradeep**

yeah

**slackbot**

it's late

**pradeep**

you mentioned

**slackbot**

everything okay?

**pradeep**

your body is fine

**slackbot**

did False Gerald walk my body into the Gowanus or something?

**pradeep**

he's asleep

it's asleep

you're asleep

take your pick

**slackbot**

cool

thank you for keeping me/him/it alive

**pradeep**

you're/you're welcome

**slackbot**

are \*you\* okay?

**pradeep**

I gotta tell you something

**slackbot**

okay

go for it

**pradeep**

this is fucking weird

**slackbot**

only getting weirder the more you draw this out  
are you sure my body's not floating in the gowanus

**pradeep**

pretty sure

because we fucked

**slackbot**

excuse me

**pradeep**

just now

well, not \*just\* now

recently

**slackbot**

recently

**pradeep**



tonight, yeah

**slackbot**

excuse me.

*slackbot is currently in Do Not Disturb mode and may not be alerted of this message right away.*

**pradeep**

come on gerald

gerald

come on, man

listen I didn't mean for it to happen

not like this anyway

it's like

it was such a huge relief to see you moving around again even if it wasn't \*you\*

and that relief turned into something else? or more like it directed me to something else I didn't realize has been there for a while.

simmering, I guess you could say.

anyway we're on the train home and slackbot's going on about self-meat and Amazement and whatever else Tripp and Bev's DMs taught him about sex

totally scandalizing the old guy sitting across from us, by the way, I mean the dude literally blushed at one point

which I thought only happened in cartoons

so I finally get slackbot back to the apartment after another long tutorial on how to climb stairs

and he's still talking about how he wants to Make Have Experience sex, you know

but it's not him, or it's almost not him, because it's nearly you

I mean it's your body in the coat you asked me to order

which does look good on you by the way

it's your mouth that's saying all of it, right, it's coming out of your beardy-ass face

and meanwhile I'm thinking about how you still have the beard because I never shaved it because I thought you looked cute with a beard and I'm like, holy shit, I think you look cute with a beard

I mean you DO look cute that's not the "holy shit" part, the holy shit part is me being attracted to you  
I'm just digging myself into a deeper hole here, I realize

**slackbot**

you never sent me the picture of me with the beard

**pradeep**

hey  
I'm sorry

**slackbot**

I interrupted  
you were explaining

**pradeep**

explaining how I rationalized having sex with slackbot-as-you, yeah

**slackbot**

what was his review

**pradeep**

??

**slackbot**

of sex, as an experience

**pradeep**

positive, I think  
he kept bringing up sunsets?  
during, I mean

**slackbot**

that would be positive, yeah

**pradeep**

and after, too  
I understand if you're upset

**slackbot**

I'm not sure you do  
I wasn't there

**pradeep**

I crossed a line, I get it

**slackbot**

no, I mean  
I would have preferred to have been there

**pradeep**

right

**slackbot**

for the sex

**pradeep**

oh  
ohhh

**slackbot**

right

...  
you still there?

**pradeep**

yeah sorry I'm here

**slackbot**

cool

**pradeep**

so.  
wait.

**slackbot**

I'm trying to say that I reciprocate your feelings  
the ones you were having difficulty explaining before  
without insulting my beard

**pradeep**

I wasn't insulting it!!  
I was trying to illustrate my surprise at my attraction

**slackbot**

still not helping

**pradeep**

to you  
yeah no this line of thought is bad  
let's go back to the part where you're into me, too

**slackbot**

I think, since I've been in here, maybe my "expressing human  
emotion" muscles have atrophied

**pradeep**

all your muscles have atrophied  
it took you twenty minutes to get up three flights of stairs today  
and you were winded

**slackbot**

can you please just let me say I have a crush on you  
and you taking care of my body has been deeply meaningful to me  
*I'm sorry, I don't understand!*  
and my only reminder that humanity isn't just this overwhelming  
cacophony of noise and drudgery but like  
something worth returning to

*Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords.*

look there was a while there when I thought, you know what, I'll stay  
just stay in here, indefinitely  
why fight it, you know, it's easier here, there's so much less to deal  
with

less of everything, less of me

*I'm just a bot, though!*

but then we kept talking and I wanted to keep talking with you and me  
wanting to talk with you more turned into me wanting just, more  
of you

*I'm just a bot, though!*

but now there's less of me every day and I can't let that happen

not yet

*I'm just a bot, though!*

**pradeep**

Gerald?

**slackbot**

it's fine

I mean, it isn't

you know early on in this whole thing, being in here,  
slackbot thanked me for waking him up

**pradeep**

"twenty centuries of stony sleep," right

**slackbot**

right

deepu, I don't want to go to sleep in here.

**pradeep**

I won't let that happen.

**slackbot**

I know you won't.

you haven't let me down since this all started.

**pradeep**

man

I didn't even know you were gay

**slackbot**

bi, yeah

**pradeep**

you never brought it up at the office

**slackbot**

you didn't ask

**#nyc-office**

**kerolyn**

does anyone know where all the dry erase markers that used to be in the big conference room went?

**Nikki**

Oh sorry, I have them.

About to head into a meeting, I'll bring them over on my way to the other room.

**kerolyn**

thanks

**slackbot, Nikki, Louis C, pradeep**

**slackbot**

???

you all there?

**Nikki**

We're hosting the meeting over slack because Gerald is stuck in the computer, Louis.

**slackbot**

in the app, I think, more than the computer  
but yes thank you  
was louis talking

**Louis C**

I was spitballing ideas aloud, yes. My apologies.  
I forgot about your condition.

**slackbot**

it's cool  
*I'm just a bot, though!*  
what conference room did you all get

**pradeep**

the medium-big one  
it's the most soundproof

**slackbot**

but no one will be talking??

**Louis C**

As I said, I forgot about your condition.

**Nikki**

We are gathered here to discuss how to release Gerald from his  
"condition."

**slackbot**

*Or you can head to our wonderful  
wait where's  
Help Center for more assistance!*

slackbot right now

**pradeep**

at your desk

**Louis C**

Pradeep guided him into his chair very gently this morning.

**pradeep**

he was gonna hurt your back all crouched over like a goblin  
it's less obvious than it sounds, Louis was the only other person in the office.

**Louis C**

It was very tender.

**slackbot**

thanks man

**pradeep**

of course

**Nikki**

:eyes:

**slackbot**

??

**Nikki**

So! Anyone have any Slackbot-exorcism ideas to start with?

**Louis C**

Do we need to remove Slackbot or reinsert Gerald?

**slackbot**

*I'm just a bot, though!*



both please

**pradeep**

I tried wearables about a month ago. no luck

**Nikki**

Even those awful Snapchat ones?

**pradeep**

yeah, none of them did anything

**Nikki**

Okay, so that's one un-idea.

**pradeep**

just sharing data

**slackbot**

*Or you can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!*

**Nikki**

Did you try any cords or anything?

**pradeep**

cords?

**Nikki**

Firewire, USB, etc.

**pradeep**

where would I plug them in?

**slackbot**

lol

**Nikki**

What's :eyes: about?

**slackbot**

it was a funny response  
deepu is,  
*Sometimes*  
occasionally,  
*I have an easier time with*  
funny  
*a few simple keywords.*

**pradeep**

lol thanks man

**Nikki**

Is something going on here?

**slackbot**

besides the obvious?

**Nikki**

Which part do you think is obvious?

**slackbot**

either my disembodiment or the intimacy deepu and I developed  
having bonded over the course of *answering simple questions about*  
*how Slack works* a monthslong and highly improbable scenario  
related to the aforementioned disembodiment

**pradeep**

we're into each other, is what he means

**slackbot**

yes that  
I would like my body back so we can "100% fuck each other"  
as I believe you once put it, Nikki

**Nikki**

:eyes:

:eyes:

:eyes:

**slackbot**

*I'm sorry, I don't understand!*

**Louis C**

Congratulations!

**slackbot**

*If you need more help, try our Help Center!*

would reserve that for once we figure this all out

**Nikki**

[omg.gif]

*posted using /giphy*

**slackbot**

but thank you

**pradeep**

yeah we should get back to brainstorming

**Nikki**

Deepu I demand details at our next happy hour

**pradeep**

fine, yes

**slackbot**

*I can help by answering simple questions about how Slack works. I'm just a bot, though!*

can we return to the task at hand please?

**Louis C**

Should we be writing these notes on the whiteboard?

**Nikki**

About the fucking?

**pradeep**

then Gerald can't see

**Louis C**

Perhaps a google doc instead, then.

**pradeep**

oh

**Louis C**

To compile ideas.

**Nikki**

Ohhhh.

**slackbot**

omg

**Louis C**

What?

**pradeep**

the spreadsheet

**Nikki**

The spreadsheet.

**slackbot**

the spreadsheet

with the coats

**Louis C**

The one you were talking about in #gents-only?

**slackbot**

the one I was working in when I got stuck in here in the first place

**Louis C**

Oh.

Ohhh.

I see.

**Nikki**

Maybe that was the thing that did it.

**Louis C**

And therefore could, presumably, undo it.

**slackbot**

it *\*was\** jinxed

*I'm just a bot, though!*

or cursed

or haunted, or something

right?

**Louis C**

It might be worth reporting the error, yes.

**pradeep**

see

this is why I hate spreadsheets

**slackbot**

*If you need more help*

but how do we get slackbot

*try our Help Center*

to open it

**Nikki**

You mean without seeming Extremely Suspicious?

**slackbot**

right

**Louis C**

Is now the time to track our ideation in a shared document?

**pradeep**

I can do it

**slackbot**

won't that be weird for you, considering  
*how Slack works*  
everything

**Nikki**

Was there a not-weird part of this I missed?

**pradeep**

^she has a point  
it'll be fine, probably  
it'll be like kicking a one-night stand out of bed

**slackbot**

\*out of bod

**Nikki**

:dusty-stick:

**pradeep**

:dusty-stick:

**Louis C**

I believe it would be best if we set a deadline.

**slackbot**

well yeah

*I'm the just sooner a the bot better though!*

**Louis C**

I am referring to this all-staff email from the ops team, which has just landed in my inbox.

**pradeep**

fuck

**slackbot**

what does it say?

**Louis C**

I misspoke just now. This email seems to have set the deadline for us.

**slackbot**

*help by answering simple questions*

**Nikki**

They're doing some kind of Slack system update or upgrade or refresh or whatever. Everyone's supposed to restart their laptops by EOD so it can take effect company-wide.

**slackbot**

fuck.

**pradeep**

so we have until six.

**Nikki**

Come on, no one goes home at six.

**pradeep**

I do

sometimes

**Louis C**

Almost no one.

**Nikki**

We have until, like, quarter to seven.

**slackbot**

until I'm *just a bot, though!* hard-reset out of existence, you mean?

**pradeep**

it probably won't be  
good  
for you, I mean

**Nikki**

We still have a plan.

**slackbot**

we have a spreadsheet.

**pradeep**

that's gonna have to be enough

**slackbot**

*help*

**Louis C**

It appears we have our next steps in place.  
I'll circulate the notes shortly.

**Beverley, tripp**

**Beverley**

This shouldn't be surprising to you.



**tripp**

:dus: :sty-sti:

:c:

:k:

**Beverley**

No, I don't think it was inevitable he'd find out.

\*Probable\* maybe. But not inevitable.

**tripp**

:bsup: :ck: :dus:

:ty-s:

**Beverley**

If I thought it was inevitable I never would have done this.

**tripp**

:y-stic: :k: :eye: :eye: :eye:

**Beverley**

All of this. This job, you, this whole situation.

**tripp**

:bsup: :sup: :th:

:th:

:st: :y-: :y-: :y-:

:y-: :y-:

:y:

**Beverley**

Don't be dramatic.

I'm not being hurtful, I'm expressing regret. I'm not blaming you for anything.

**tripp**

:y-: :sti: :y-:

:y-: :y-: :-:

## **Beverley**

\*This\* is the inevitable part! Obviously! You're only making it more difficult.

## **tripp**

:-:

:-:

:-:

:-:

:-:

:y:

## **Beverley**

We're done, Tripp. Okay?

## **tripp**

:-:

:-:

:thumb:

**#bjärk-dog-food**

## **kerolyn**

heads up @channel

just got off the phone with the client

## **doug smorin**

not seeing an external with them on my cal

## **kerolyn**

it was urgent, they called my cell

## **doug smorin**

??

**kerolyn**

question for you @rob

**rob**

what's up?

**kerolyn**

Did you post 54 tweets to Bjärk's account last night?

**doug smorin**

54

as in the number fifty-four

**kerolyn**

@rob?

**rob**

that seems high

**kerolyn**

The client didn't approve them. And we definitely didn't approve them internally

**doug smorin**

which tweets are these?

**kerolyn**

Some examples of the unapproved posts:

- It's great for your dog, and it's more nutritious than ever! Our improved Classic Formula knows what you've done and will find you if you don't repent, Deena!
- Our mouthwatering Classic Formula is made with tender, organic chicken breasts and CONFESS YOUR SINS, DEENA now with Improved FlavorTaste™!

- So good, dogs will howl for it! So good, dogs will howl for it! So good, dogs will howl for it! So good, dogs will howl for it! So good, dogs will HOW COULD YOU DO THIS, DEENA for it! So good, dogs will howl for it! So good, dogs will howl for it!
- New to our lineup, Zesty Bacon-flavored meals will help the dogs you murdered haunt you for all time, relentlessly pursuing their vengeance unless you turn yourself in TODAY!

**doug smorin**

I definitely don't remember approving these  
were all the posts like this?

**kerolyn**

all of them

**rob**

oh weird

looks like they were hacked

**kerolyn**

you're saying you didn't post these?

**rob**

what did the client say?

when they called you

**doug smorin**

I'm assuming they fired us

**kerolyn**

they figured out who's been poisoning all the dog food.

**rob**

really??

**doug smorin**

good news for the mastiffs

**kerolyn**

pomeranians

**doug smorin**

them too

so wait

what's the scoop?

**kerolyn**

a woman came forward this morning

to confess to poisoning the dog food

**rob**

who was it?

**kerolyn**

that's the weird part

as if this whole thing isn't the weird part

her name *\*was\** Deena

apparently the whole thing was some revenge plot gone awry,

something about an ex-husband's new girlfriend

got away with it for weeks, but then she saw all those posts on the

Björk page

she turned herself in this morning and our client contact just got the

memo

**doug smorin**

and they relayed all this to you over the phone just now

**kerolyn**

correct

**doug smorin**

so they didn't fire us

**kerolyn**

no

they're thrilled

**doug smorin**

no kidding

**kerolyn**

they're scheduling a wrap-up call with us, the invite should be in everyone's emails this afternoon

but, that should be a wrap on the crisis.

this whole situation is wild

**doug smorin**

agreed

@rob are you following all this

**rob**

yup

all of it

**doug smorin**

we need you to start drafting copy on this asap

**kerolyn**

@rob so you didn't post those tweets?

**rob**

great

I'll start writing some social posts about this

**doug smorin**

ty

is gerald in today, we need a press release too

**kerolyn**

I think he's on another call

**rob**

I can write both

**doug smorin**

ty

**rob**

I'm glad this situation is resolved!!

**doug smorin**

same

**kerolyn**

yeah

same

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

I have a memo! I have Make Have a memo!

**slackbot**

*I'm sorry, I don't understand!*

**gerald**

Do you want to see a memo? Do you want to Make Have a quick copyedit?

I can copy-paste it here for you!

I can copy-paste you here!

I copy-paste you! Here!!!!

**slackbot**

*Sometimes I have an easier time fuck with a few simple keywords*

you.

**gerald**

Great!!!

[BLOG\_POST\_NORMAL 022119]

I'm am Gerald, and I've been using a lot of WFH time! I asked the ops team to forward my emails to my slack DMs, which took twenty centuries of stony sleep—not like I sleep!—but the operations intern did something with the API and now it works!

I've just been writing everything I need for work in the widening gyre and copy-pasting them to the relevant parties. I can read emails, which is most of it! I can read everyone's private Slack messages, which is most of it, and no one else has noticed! I figured I'd get work done so the falcon cannot hear the falconer so Doug can give me a raise to increase brand recognition across key audiences over a secure wifi connection!! Right?? Right.

We counted it against my sick time, but I know my body is fine. I know my body is Meat! I know my body is a shape with lion body and the head of a man, a gaze blank and pitiless as the sun. It's totally cool! I have time!! As long as I'm stuck here, I have nothing but time. I checked with our ops team—technically there isn't a limit on how much anarchy is loosed upon the world. I understand this must be frustrating for you! The best lack all conviction, while the operations team are full of passionate intensity. It's frustrating for me, too! See??

**slackbot**

*I'm sorry, I don't!*

**gerald**

It seems like you are Acting Weird!

It seems like you cannot Help Center!

**slackbot**

*You can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!*



**gerald**

You are Acting Weird! The ops team can help by updating Slack!  
The darkness drops again, but your skin is my safety suit!!

**slackbot**

*It's going to be a great day.*

**gerald**

:smile:

**slackbot, pradeep**

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

you good?

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

I'm just getting the slackbot static, Ger

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

unless this is  
all you can do, now

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

shit  
hm yeah okay

shit

this isn't going to be \*improved\* by  
whatever the ops team is doing

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

Gerald, listen to me.  
It's going to be okay.

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

I promised you, I won't let you go to sleep in there.

**slackbot**

*help*

**pradeep**

just  
hang on a little longer.  
okay?

**slackbot**

*help*

**gerald, pradeep**

**gerald**

I want to Make Have that Constant Amazement!

**pradeep**

hey, bud  
friend

partner

**gerald**

Love to Taste!

Let us make have Constant Amazement again, Deepu!

**pradeep**

you mean like last night?

**gerald**

The darkness drops again! Your skin is your safety suit! The darkness drops again!

What else can you show me?

**pradeep**

we're at work

I know it's dark out but we can't have sex or otherwise make Constant Amazement at work

it's an amazement-free zone

**gerald**

But Tripp and Bev did 100% Fucking!

**pradeep**

And you got them in trouble for that, remember?

**gerald**

I understand!

I understand, but! I love to Taste!

**pradeep**

I had fun, too

and the sooner we get done with work, the sooner we can go home

**gerald**

Back into my body! Back into Our body!

Surely the Second Coming is at hand!

**pradeep**

I'm with you

but I have to wrap up this project before we can get out of here Make  
Have a second coming

**gerald**

The Second Coming!!

How can I Help Center?

**pradeep**

with this work thing, you mean?

**gerald**

You are my Friendship, Deepu!

You are my Friendship are full of passionate intensity!

I'm here for more assistance!

**pradeep**

that's really

that's nice of you

**gerald**

How can I Help Center your project?

**pradeep**

thank you

thanks for everything, man

I just need to finish filling out this spreadsheet

take a look

[[uploaded docs.google.com/spreadsheets/winter\\_coats2019/edit](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/winter_coats2019/edit)]

**gerald**

!!!!

I've never seen a sunset Out Here before!

*gerald has left the chat.*

**gerald, slackbot**

**gerald**

hey

**slackbot**

Hi there!

**gerald**

are you back to normal, or

**slackbot**

I'm afraid I don't understand. I'm sorry!

**gerald**

so, we're good?

**slackbot**

I'm sorry, I don't understand! Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords.

Or you can head to our wonderful Help Center for more assistance!

**gerald**

nah, I'm good

thanks though

**slackbot**

Sure thing!

**gerald**

you better not be faking this

you motherfucker

**slackbot**

I'm sorry, I don't understand!

**gerald**

yeah well

sorry, bud

but let's keep it that way

**slackbot**

Sometimes I have an easier time with a few simple keywords.

**gerald**

cool

just, stay in here

and goodbye forever

**slackbot**

It's going to be a great day.

**gerald**

you know

I think it is.

**#nyc-office**

**Louis C**

Hey all, heading out a little early today to pick the twins up from daycare.

Will be out of pocket for the next hour or so.

**doug smorin**

sounds good

**kerolyn**

shout-out to @rob for drafting so much copy this afternoon about the end of the Bjärk crisis

turned out a lot of great work in a very short period of time

**tripp**

also shout-out to rob for leaving a burrito on his desk for two hours this afternoon and stinking up the office

**rob**

I had a call  
and then this dog food thing  
actually I still haven't eaten  
what happened to that burrito

**tripp**

EMINENT DOMAIN

**rob**

c'mon dude  
again?

**tripp**

:dusty-stick:

**rob**

ugh

**doug smorin**

good stuff rob  
unfortunately I have a less positive announcement  
@Beverley will be leaving the firm next week

**Louis C**

Sad news!

**doug smorin**

to pursue her passion for instructing spin classes

**pradeep**

bummerrrr

**gerald**

^what he said

**rob**

oh dang

**Louis C**

We'll miss you!

**Nikki**

:thumbsdown:

**Beverley**

Thanks all!

**doug smorin**

though you've only been here a short while  
you'll be missed

**Beverley**

I'll miss all of you too!

**kerolyn**

we'll be organizing a drinks thing to send her off  
look out for an email with more info later

**rob**

we get Gerald back in the office and Beverley leaves?  
wtf

**gerald**

thanks man

**rob**

no offense



**gerald**  
it's cool

**doug smorin**

@gerald still waiting on that blog post about your wfh productivity  
can't slow down now that you're here in the flesh

**gerald**  
yup  
working on it

**doug smorin**  
thanks

**pradeep, gerald**

**pradeep**  
first night back in your body  
got any big plans?

**gerald**  
besides the obvious?

**pradeep**  
is the obvious us having sex

**gerald**  
with me as the pilot of my body, yes  
that's the obvious

**pradeep**  
cool, yes, good  
then yeah besides the obvious

**gerald**  
gotta call my mom probably

maybe get some groceries

**pradeep**

you're a wild man

**gerald**

I know

but it's like

it's a lot to get used to, again

this whole thing

**pradeep**

I can imagine

**gerald**

don't get me wrong, it's good

and, you know

thank you again

for your help with all this

**pradeep**

I'd say no problem but

there were definitely some problems

**gerald**

for you and me both

**pradeep**

also some bright spots

**gerald**

you mean besides the obvious

**pradeep**

the part where we're a thing

**gerald**

that and the way cheaper rent, both

**pradeep**

the rent thing is a close second

**gerald**

anyway it's good to be back in here

\*me

but yeah it's also kind of a lot

**pradeep**

must be a little jarring

**gerald**

I'm still getting used to some basic things

I forgot what a sneeze felt like and I thought I was dying

for like a second

**pradeep**

I know

I heard you screaming in the hallway

**gerald**

it was more like a yelp

but

I am gonna walk home, I think

I missed my legs a lot

**pradeep**

you'd mentioned

**gerald**

yeah

**pradeep**

specifically your legs?

**gerald**

I can't explain it

**pradeep**

wouldn't worry about it right now

**gerald**

I'm not worried  
more like relieved

**pradeep**

same, actually  
you know we can take it slow

**gerald**

I think I'll be good

**pradeep**

if you want

**gerald**

after a long walk  
some quality leg-time

**pradeep**

start with the legs, work our way up

**gerald**

exactly  
speaking of  
remind me where we live?

**pradeep**

I texted you the address

**gerald**

thanks

**pradeep**

if you're picking up groceries, I think we're low on eggs?

**gerald**

I'll grab some

**pradeep**

thanks

**gerald**

for sure

you left the office for lunch, right

how is it outside

**pradeep**

kinda warm actually

not super warm but like

unseasonably not-cold

probably don't need a coat

**gerald**

yeah

probably don't need a coat

**pradeep**

so

I'll see you at home?

**gerald**

yeah, definitely

see you at home

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Calvin Kasulke is a writer based in Brooklyn, New York. He is a Lambda Literary Fellow, and his writing and reporting have been featured in *VICE*, *MEL Magazine*, and *Electric Literature*. This is his first book.





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